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Bellies on Display

Last weekend's Jimmy Buffet concert gave me the opportunity to see—and I mean that literally—the waistlines of men of all ages. It was hot and humid, and many men chose not to wear shirts. Ladies, most of these men were not the ones you want to see shirtless.

If the men wore shirts, they usually left them unbuttoned. Or maybe they were unbuttoned because the shirts weren't big enough to fit around some of the most enormous bellies I've seen. Either way, many of the bellies were a deep tan, so you know this wasn't a one-day phenomenon. Age didn't seem to matter—whether 35 or 65, the bellies were on display and seemed to be worn with pride.

The problem is that the waist is the worst place to carry body fat. You can find out all the reasons why in *Dr. Chet's Health Tips for Men* when I talk about the Gut of Death. Here's one more reason from a recently published study (1): as waist circumference goes up, so does the death rate. If a man's waist size exceeds 47 inches—and there were plenty of those in Margaritaville—the risk of death doubles over the next ten years.

Check your waist by measuring it just above your navel, keeping the tape measure level. I'm not talking about your jean size. Measure it. If it's greater than 39 inches for men and 35 inches for women, time to get to work and get rid of that belly. Guys, believe me when I tell you they're not all that attractive.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: Arch Int Med 2010;170(15)1293-1301.

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