

## **Bat Wings and Belly Fat**

One Monday morning while attending my three times a week stretch and muscle class, I noticed that the class was mostly women; average age was about 66. While tuning in to some of the chatter that goes on before the class officially started, I noticed that many of the women, including me, were almost as obsessed with flabby arms (triceps) and belly fat as some younger women. Flabby arms are also called jiggle arms or bat wings.

In this class, our routine consists of numerous repetitions (reps) and moves directed at triceps and belly fat. Sometimes, it feels as if my arms are going to fall off; and my ribs have been run over by a truck. Yet, no matter how many reps I do, my triceps still jiggle; and my belly is still fat (I am talking mini muffin top).

The instructor works the hell out of both. She has been teaching this class for over 20 years; and many of the same students have been taking the class for that long. I often wonder what her triceps and abs look like. I have not spoken to anyone who has actually seen them because she always wears a loose fitting shirt and long sleeves no matter how hot the exercise room gets. Some of us have concluded that either she has “killer” triceps and a six pack (hard abs); and, doesn’t want to flaunt them for fear of making us even more self-conscious. Or her triceps and abs are just as jiggle and flabby as ours. Whatever the reason, I am beginning to think that for those of us pushing 60 or have moved well beyond 60, belly fat and jiggle arms are here to stay – no matter what we do or how much we do it. Therefore, it’s time to STOP obsessing over them. It is what it is.

Now, here’s an interesting tidbit. I am the only African American woman in these classes. When I am with my African American women friends, belly fat and flabby triceps never enter into the conversation. My African American sisters are not concerned. They don’t go around hiding their arms in long sleeves and binding their bodies with tight fitting undergarments (think spanx). They proudly go sleeveless and let it all hang out. They graciously accept the fact that they are no longer 30; and after a certain age, stuff happens. By the way, I love that attitude. However, just as some women, regardless of age, are not ready for gray hair (I was ready for it in my early 50s), I am not quite ready for jiggle arms and belly fat.

How about you? How do you feel about jiggle arms and belly fat?

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