

Understanding Your Metabolism

If you find that you are unable to eat the foods that you used to enjoy without gaining weight, you may be experiencing a slower metabolism. Although dealing with a slower metabolism is a fact of aging, there are steps that you can take to help increase your metabolism and maintain a healthy weight.

Use this information to learn more about metabolism and what you can do to make sure it works for you instead of against you.

What is metabolism?

Metabolism is simply the amount of energy, or calories, that your body burns throughout the day. Although calories are burned the fastest during exercise, your body burns calories while you are doing relatively inactive things, such as watching TV or even sleeping. The amount of calories that your body burns during these activities is called “resting metabolism.”

What determines metabolism?

There are many factors that determine the rate of your metabolism, such as:

- Sex
- Height
- Weight
- Age
- Genetics
- Body composition

While some of these factors cannot be changed, there are lifestyle choices that you can make to help increase your metabolism and lose weight.

Exercise and Your Metabolism

The best way to increase your metabolism is through a regular exercise program that includes both cardiovascular activity and strength training. Muscles actively use and burn more calories than fat tissue does. As your muscles burn calories, your metabolism speeds up to provide your muscles with extra energy.

Cardiovascular exercise, such as running or cycling, helps you burn calories while you exercise and builds muscle. Strength training increases muscle mass, which helps to increase your resting metabolism.

You do not need to become a fitness guru or a bodybuilder in order to get results. Even daily activities, such as gardening and housekeeping, can help to boost metabolism. An exercise plan that includes heart rate-boosting activities with muscle toning weight training is enough to positively affect your metabolism.

Additional Tips

Use the following tips to help maintain a healthy lifestyle while continuing to increase your metabolism:

- **Do not skip meals.** When you skip meals, your body goes into a protective mode to prevent starvation. Extra calories are stored as fat in preparation for a period of famine. Eating four to six smaller meals per day may actually be more beneficial than eating three large meals.
- **Drink plenty of water.** Your body needs water in order to function properly. Depriving your body of water's nutrients can cause organs to focus on retaining water rather than burning fat.
- **Watch your caloric intake.** As we age, our metabolism naturally slows down, and we need fewer calories to maintain a healthy weight. If you notice that your eating habits have not changed but that you are gaining weight, talk to your doctor to find a healthy eating plan that works for you.

Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health: www.nlm.nih.gov

Here when you need us.

Call: 844-207-5465

Online: guidanceresources.com

App: GuidanceNowSM

Web ID: LivingME

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