

Get to know your Metabolism Lecture August 3, 2009

Metabolism is the amount of calories that your body uses to maintain itself. Metabolism is affected by the amount of muscle you have versus the amount of fat. Muscle uses more calories to maintain itself than fat. This is because muscle is an active tissue.

This is what you can expect when you boost your metabolism:

- You will slow down the aging process. How? Through exercise
- You will increase your strength, stamina, and immunity. How? Through exercise
- You will reduce your body fat and fight off cardiovascular disease. How? Through exercise
- You will enhance your memory and restore your youthful glow. How? Through exercise.

Notice a pattern here?

First how do you increase your metabolism?

You can do easy things like parking your car as far away as possible from the door of the mall or grocery store or where ever you happen to be traveling to on any given day. You can take the stairs instead of the elevator; everything you do throughout the day will increase your metabolism for that day. And, the more you move, the more muscle you use, the more those muscles become conditioned, the more energy they will consume at rest. Remember, muscle requires oxygen just to maintain its resting state; fat just sits there and waits to be fed again. Muscle is very active tissue; a pound of muscle burns 35 calories a day while a pound of fat 2 calories a day.

After the age 30, your body gradually begins to lose its muscle. If your activity level stays the same and the amount of calories you eat stay the same, you will gain weight because your metabolism has slowed down. If you exercise with weights and some type of aerobic activity on a regular basis, you probably won't notice much of a change in your metabolism as you age.

Slow metabolism symptoms: fatigue, feeling cold, dry skin, constipation, a slow pulse and low blood pressure. **MAKE SURE YOU SEE YOUR DOCTOR** do not diagnose yourself.

Genetics can play a role, but I don't want to focus on this factor. I don't want to focus on what can't be changed.

Begin to exercise and stop dieting. You need a healthy meal program that focuses on foods lower in fat these foods really work with your metabolism. The foods you eat should also increase your metabolism. Specifically, the action is called thermogenesis. It is the heat created as your body digests food and distributes nutrients where they are needed. Check out the foods listed below that work well with speeding up your metabolism. If you are not currently eating any of these listed food items; maybe it's time to stock your frig and pantry and give your metabolism a boost.

Exercising before your meal has the calorie effect of food that is nearly two times the calorie-burning effect at rest. Eating lightly throughout the day will keep your metabolism humming and leveled all day long as well.

Strength training is another way to increase your metabolism. This can be done with light weights and a high number of reps, or a higher intensity lifting with fewer reps, both work on large muscle groups. The first makes smaller muscles more conditioned and defined the second brings mass/size to the muscles as well as conditions them. Although the look of both is different, the results are the same...a higher metabolism.

Ways to slow your metabolism

If you eat a very low calorie diet you will slow your metabolism down. Your goal may be to speed it up, but it won't and weight gain will not be far behind.

Not exercising will slow it down also. You will not be building muscle which is active tissue you will be storing fat...which just sits there.

Tips:

Try not to eat big meals after 10pm. This is because your metabolism runs at its slowest rate at night.

At 40, your metabolism has slowed down for the 3rd time (20, 30 and 40) this means you don't require the same amount of calories as you did in your 20s. To counteract this age related weight gain we need to reduce our calorie intake (by about 100 calories a day per decade) or increase our calorie expenditure (by about 100 calories a day per decade - the equivalent of a brisk one mile walk).

Conclusion:

Everything goes back to exercise and eating healthy. It may not be the fast track, but it will get your metabolism on track.

Questions

Foods that will help speed up your metabolism

Grapefruit lowers the insulin levels in your body that trigger your system to store fat. Plus, it is rich in fiber, and your body must burn extra calories in order to break it down.

Green Tea: is the main source of epigallocatechin gallate, known better as EGCG. This healthy catechin speeds up your brain and nervous system, causing your body to burn more calories.

Yogurt: The high levels of protein present in natural yogurt require a lot of energy to be processed. Plus, the pro-biotic cultures found in yogurt help regulate your digestive tract.

Almonds: Almonds' help raise your body's metabolism. Just don't overdo it because they're also very high in calories.

Coffee: Coffee has caffeine, which does give you a boost. Just ensure that you don't exceed 2 or 3 cups a day, or you risk a host of side effects, including irritability and jitters.

Turkey: This protein-rich meat builds lean muscle tissue, which causes your body to burn extra calories and raises your metabolism.

Apples: Like grapefruit, this low-calorie snack is high in fiber, which your body must burn calories to break down. Plus, since apples help you stay full for longer, you'll eat less.

Spinach: Popeye was right about one thing: spinach can help make you strong and healthy. In addition to speeding up your metabolism, it's a great source of antioxidants, magnesium, potassium, iron and vitamin C.

Beans: Low in fat and packed with protein, beans keep you full for long durations, and your body must burn extra calories in order to process this fiber-rich food.

Jalapenos: The capsaicin found in jalapenos causes your body to burn extra calories for hours after you ingest them, speeding up both your heart rate and metabolism.

Broccoli: Broccoli contains a highly effective metabolism-boosting team of nutrients: calcium and vitamin C. Calcium acts as a metabolic trigger, while vitamin C helps your body absorb more calcium.

Oatmeal: Because your body takes a long time to break down the fat-soluble fiber in oatmeal, this healthy food lowers your body's insulin level and speeds up your metabolism as a result.

Soy: Fortified soy milk is loaded with calcium, which helps boost your metabolism. Just stay away from the sweetened varieties.

Curry: Like jalapenos, curry increases the amount of calories your body burns and speeds up your metabolism.

Cinnamon: A little bit of cinnamon can go a long way. Add some zing to your daily cup of tea with this tasty spice to help your body metabolize sugars more effectively and maintain steadier. Blood Sugar Levels Cinnamon can also help lower your cholesterol.