

Boosting Your Metabolism 101

Introduction

Metabolism is all of the physical and chemical processes in the body that maintain life. These processes involve creating and consuming energy. Metabolic rates are determined by how fast energy can be produced and used. These rates are influenced by a variety of factors, such as age, sex, and proportion of lean body mass, which is the muscle to fat ratio.

There are many products in the market that claim to increase metabolic rates. You may believe that supplements and diet pills are the answer for stimulating the metabolism. However, harmful side effects can occur if some of these products are regularly consumed. One example of complications that can occur with the intake of “metabolic boosters” is an increased risk for heart attack and stroke. Ephedrine, a drug no longer in diet products, was removed from circulation because it was proven to cause heart attacks.

In contrast, Boosting Your Metabolism 101 provides a safe and effective guide to revving up your metabolism. This instruction guide does not recommend the use of any diet pills and only suggests the use of natural supplements. This instruction set will detail how to boost your metabolism through 3 easy steps.

Note:

- This guide is not meant to ensure weight loss.

Step 1: Changing your eating patterns

The first step to increasing your metabolism is to alter your diet habits. Many easy changes can be made in order to increase your metabolic rate. Abide by the following suggestions for desired results.

Always eat breakfast

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day because it starts up the metabolism. While sleeping, the metabolism shuts down, breathing slows, and heart rate decreases. It is important to eat soon after waking because your metabolic rate will not reach its optimal level until food is consumed.



Eat small meals frequently

Instead of eating the traditional 3 meals a day, try eating 5 or 6. Space these meals apart about 20 min to 3 hrs.¹ After 3 hours of fasting, the metabolism begins to slow down. Eating meals and snacks frequently throughout the day keeps the metabolism active.

Avoid starvation

Starving is a poor decision when trying to lose weight and/or to boost the metabolism. Eating less than 1200 Calories per day will slow the metabolism because the body will enter starvation mode. During this time, the body tries to conserve energy by decreasing the metabolic rate.

Consume more protein

Protein takes 25% more energy to digest than carbohydrates and fat¹. When protein is consumed, the metabolism is forced to speed up in order to provide the extra energy needed for protein digestion.

Note:

- Percentages are approximations and will vary slightly for each

Consume very spicy foods

If it makes you sweat or pant, then it is likely that the food you are consuming has metabolism enhancing effects. Very hot foods have been shown to increase the metabolic rate by 20% for approximately 30 min after consumption¹



Stay hydrated

For metabolic processes to occur, water is needed. If you are dehydrated then your metabolism will not be able to remain at its normal rate. Avoid this by drinking at least 8 cups (1 cup = 8 ounces) of water each day.

Step 2: Performing the right activities

Although the metabolic rate can increase through diet change alone, this instruction set would not be complete without exercise and activity suggestions. Your daily activity level has a significant impact on your metabolic rate.

¹ <http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/guide/make-most-your-metabolism?page=3>

Do more weight and strength training exercises

If you have heard that muscle burns more energy than fat, you already know of one way to boost your metabolism. A higher proportion of lean body mass (all tissues besides fat) will increase the metabolism because a pound of muscle burns 25 Calories per day, while a pound of fat only burns 2 Calories per day. Strength and weight training exercise have been shown to increase muscle mass and metabolic rate. Table 1 depicts that participants in a resistance training program increased their resting metabolic rate by 7.7%.



Table 1: Effect of Strength Training on Resting Metabolic Rate²

	Untrained Individuals	Strength Trained Individuals	% Change
Fat Free Mass	60.6 kg	62.2 kg	2.6 %
Resting Metabolic Rate	6449 kJ/24 hrs	6998 kJ/24 hrs	7.7 %

The individuals who participate in this experiment either had no strength training or went through a 16 week strength training program.

Keep up the movement

Just moving around more during the day will increase the metabolism because it will force the body to produce more energy to fuel these movements. Take the stairs, go for walks, and do other aerobic exercises in order to boost the metabolism.

Sleep enough

Get enough sleep to avoid fatigue during the day. Fatigue may cause you to limit activity which will subsequently decrease metabolic activity.

Step 3: Considering supplements

Natural nutritional supplements can further help to stimulate the metabolism. However, supplements need to be chosen with caution. Many supplements cannot be recommended because not enough research has been done regarding their side effects. Two supplements that have been proven to have metabolic boosting effects are B vitamin supplements and green tea extracts.

CAUTION:

- Consult a physician before supplement use
- Always follow label instructions and take the recommended dose

² <http://jap.physiology.org/cgi/content/abstract/76/1/133>

Take a B vitamin supplement

Many of the B vitamins are required for the body to carry out various metabolic tasks, such as energy converting reactions. A deficiency in any of these vitamins may lead to a decreased metabolic rate.

Drink more green tea extract

Besides its powerful antioxidant characteristics, green tea can also provide a metabolic boost. Research has shown that green tea extract causes a 4% increase in one's daily metabolic rate³.



Conclusion

This guide has provided you with safe and effective ways to increase your metabolism. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to measure your metabolic rate to test the results of your changes. Consult your physician if you have any further questions about \ boosting your metabolism or taking supplements.

³ <http://thyroid.about.com/cs/dietweightloss/a/greentea.htm>