5 Tips on Boosting Your Metabolism

April 2, 2008 By Kellee Terrell

Most of us know that metabolism is an important factor in losing weight. But how, exactly, does it help? Your weight is determined by, among other factors, the number of calories you consume versus the number you burn. Metabolism is the force that burns those calories.

Aging, gender and a sedentary lifestyle can slow down the process. *Real Health* offers safe tips on how to rev up your engine—and trim fat and lose weight.

1. **Do not skip meals:** A key to losing weight is cutting calories, but that doesn't mean fasting. When you don't eat, your body thinks it's starving and conserves calories instead of burning them. So eat five or six small meals a day—breakfast, lunch, dinner and two or more snack. But don't go crazy—watch your calories, fat, sugar and sodium content. Find out how many calories you should be consuming every day by clicking here.
2. **Exercising regularly**: You've heard, "You gotta move it to lose it." In order to burn calories you have to do some form of aerobic exercise most days of the week for at least 30 minutes a day: walking, jogging, hip-hop dance or chasing after your kids. If you already exercise regularly, mix it up and increase the intensity so your body doesn't get used to the same activity.
3. **Strength training:** One pound of muscle burns 35-50 calories a day, while one pound of fat only burns 2 calories—that's a big difference. Muscle also burns calories when you are resting, so grab some free weights and lift at least two days a week along with doing cardio. Ladies don't worry: Strength training won't bulk you up. Try this fat-burning strength workout, which is modified for all fitness levels.
4. **Increase your omega-3 intake:** Omega-3 fats found in salmon, herring and sardines are good for heart health. But omega-3s also help regulate metabolism, says a study in the journal Obesity Research. Researchers found that those who consumed omega 3s while exercising lost more weight. Not into fish? Try adding ground flaxseed to oatmeal or salads or try a fish oil supplement. Experts suggest taking 1,000 to 2,000 milligrams a day of a fish oil supplement. Click here to learn more about omega-3s and which foods they are naturally found in.
5. **Drink green tea:** This hot Chinese brew full of flavonoids—antioxidants found in plants—is known for clearing toxins and preventing dehydration, but it can also help you lose weight. A Swiss study found that almost three quarters of participants who drank the equivalent of three cups of green tea a day burned 80 calories more than those who didn't.

FYI: In some instances, metabolism issues may be a result of thyroid disease. If you suspect that you are suffering from this, speak to your doctor or health care practitioner. Read more about thyroid disease here.

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