

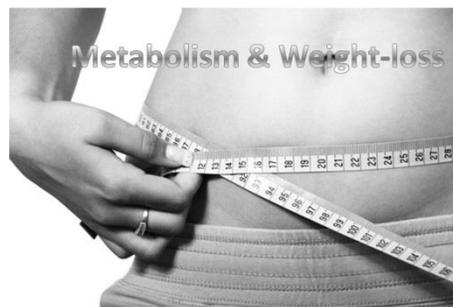
Is Metabolism Crucial to Weight Loss?

- 4S Fitness

You may have cut down calories, you may be sweating it out in the gym, but you still aren't losing weight. Do you know why? One of the main reasons this is happening to you is because of, what experts would call, your slow metabolism.

What is metabolism?

In simple terms, metabolism is all the processes that take place every second inside the body to keep you alive and enable all your organs to function properly. For these chemical processes, your body requires energy and the minimum energy needed is called the Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR). Now, haven't you heard experts constantly use this acronym time and again? Don't fret, it essentially means a slow metabolism is nothing but a low BMR. You can calculate how much energy your body needs depending on age and lifestyle using calculators available online.



Why does metabolism vary from person to person?

Metabolic rate depends on several factors like body size, age, gender and also genetics. Lean muscles require more energy than fat cells. Hence people with better muscle percentage have a better metabolic rate. Also as people age, people tend to lose muscle and gain fat – thereby explaining why BMR dips with age. Owing to their better lean muscle mass, men have been gifted with faster metabolism as compared to women. Ladies, it's okay. Don't get disheartened. There are ways you can boost your metabolism. Read on.

Your fitness routine could be lowering your metabolism

Shocking, right? Here's a twist in the tale. Crash diets and calorie-restricted diets that devoid your body the right kind of nutrients result in muscle loss instead of fat. Your weighing scale might show a loss in weight, but that instant water loss will only harm your metabolism in the long run.

Researchers claim that if a person brings about an overall change in their lifestyle and focuses on not just a proper diet and fitness plan, but also work towards boosting metabolism, then the chances of him/her losing weight are much higher.

How to boost metabolism

Here's a look at 10 ways you can boost your metabolism

1. **Avoid dieting:** That's right. Do not diet, rather eat healthy. Eat the right kind of nutrition at regular intervals. Stick to the age old mantra of smaller and frequent meals. Don't starve at any point in time.
2. **Sleep well:** It's a small, but most ignored fact. Proper sleep of at least 7-8 hours daily is a must for someone trying to lose weight. Lack of sleep only decreases metabolism and also increases stress levels.
3. **Eat more protein:** Protein is the most important nutrient that your body needs to maintain muscle mass. Researchers claim that an individual needs anywhere between 0.8 to 1 gram of protein per pound of body weight. So all you need to do is eat the right kind of protein like egg whites, chicken breast, pulses etc.
4. **Get up and stand often:** Keep yourself as active as possible. In today's world, most of us are bound to our computers and barely pay attention to our increasing waistline. Small bursts of physical activity, throughout the day, will boost your metabolism. A small walk after lunch, taking the stairs whenever possible, standing more often etc. will help.

5. **Drink a lot of water:** Most people just ignore how important water is. Water, also known as the elixir of life, keeps your body hydrated and also boosts metabolism. Researchers recommend about 10 glasses of water daily. For those involved in strenuous physical activities, you need to up your water intake.
6. **Heat it up:** According to researchers, consuming close to 1 tablespoon of chopped green or red chillies can result in a temporary spike in metabolism. So keep the heat quotient of your meals up, if not always at least most of the times.
7. **Eat within 30 minutes of waking up:** Kick start your metabolism by eating a healthy and scrumptious meal within 30 minutes of waking up. Make sure you incorporate a good amount of protein in your breakfast because that will be absorbed by your body instantly, especially after the overnight fasting period.
8. **Drink Coffee or Tea:** Caffeine is said to stimulate your central nervous system, hence giving your body its daily dose of a cup of java could boost your metabolism by at least 5-8 percent. Researchers also claim that one cup of brewed tea can rev your metabolism by 12 percent! All those who dislike green tea, try a milder variant and just drink up the booster.
9. **Consumer Iron-rich foods:** Thanks to iron, your muscles get enough oxygen that it needs to burn fat. Now, unless you continue to replenish your body with essential iron, the chances of your metabolism dipping are high. Hence, give your body enough iron by consuming, lean meats, beans, spinach etc.
10. **Drink Milk:** You may be surprised to learn that lack of calcium can lead to slow metabolism. It's extremely important to give your body enough calcium and milk is one the best sources available. Also note, consuming calcium in the form of dairy products is known for reducing the amount of fat your body absorbs. Don't give up hope, if you are trying hard to lose weight. There are ways by which you can achieve your goal, and by ways we mean going down the healthy road! Remember, there isn't any short-cuts to success.