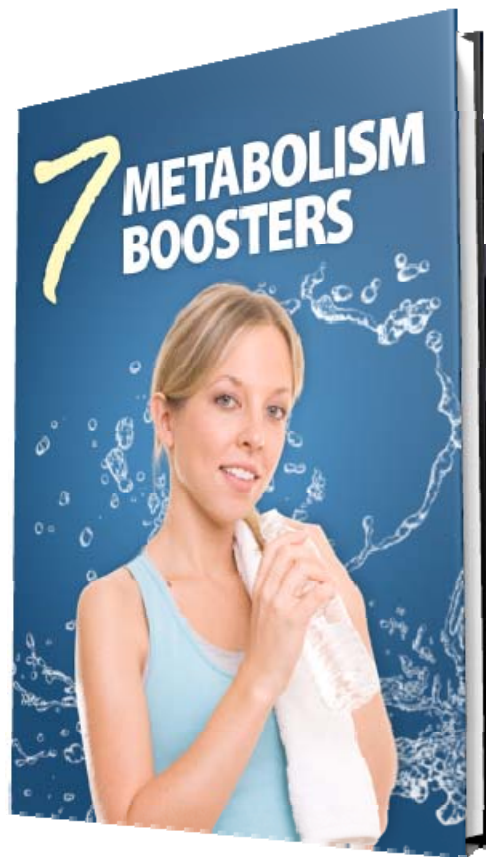


7 METABOLISM BOOSTERS



Deep inside every person, there is a desire to be fitter, healthier, thinner. Thankfully, buried not quite as deep inside is the perfect mechanism to make it possible: metabolism. Depending on an intricate system of enzymes and hormones, your metabolism is what determines how efficiently your body burns off the food you consume.

Though some of your ability to obtain and maintain a high metabolism is genetic, low-metabolism genes are no reason to throw in the towel. If you're willing to take the necessary steps, you can increase your metabolism to ensure your body is hard at work, burning unwanted calories, no matter what your genes look like or what you happen to be doing.

Ready to give your metabolism a big boost? Read on to learn about seven tried-and-true ways to raise your metabolism to new heights.

#1: Eat Breakfast

If you're not eating breakfast every day, you're doing your metabolism and your entire being a disservice. Even skipping one day of breakfast can slow your metabolism. How? By forcing your body to get out of its comfort zone. Suddenly, instead of receiving a heaping helping of calories to start the day, your body gets nothing. So it does what any smart organism would do: it clings to every ounce of energy it can find. In order for your body to survive as long as possible, it's got to keep hold of calories and your metabolism will have to slow down, which it does willingly.

To help your metabolism sidestep hunger-induced slowdowns, eat a good breakfast with plenty of long-lasting calories from foods such as eggs and oatmeal. By eating foods like this for breakfast, you'll feel full longer, enabling your metabolism to work at its peak and preventing your body from going into save-the-calories mode.

#2: Drink It Down

Somewhere along the line, you probably heard that drinking cold water helps you burn calories, as your body has to work to warm the water up to your body temperature. Though this may seem like a silly old wives' tale, it is true. And while you probably won't shed pound after pound just by drinking cold water, you will definitely toss a few calories off your frame by doing it consistently.

Have sensitive teeth and can't handle ice-cold water? No problem. Regardless of the temperature you prefer to drink your water, simply drinking between 64 and 96 ounces of water every day assists your metabolism. Of course, the word "simply" may not have been the best to use. It may seem an easy way to increase your metabolism, but downing 8 to 12 glasses of water a day is no easy task. It may actually take as much work as the next step.

#3: Muscle Up

It's commonly known that muscle burns more calories than fat. To get your metabolism on the up and up, you'll need more muscle, which can be achieved through two methods: aerobic exercise and strength training. On the aerobics side, you'll want to pick up between 30 minutes and an hour of walking, running, swimming, cycling, or aerobics three to five days a week. But if you want the maximum boost for your metabolism, your exercise routine can't end on the stationary bicycle. You're going to have to pick up the free weights and start lifting.

For the best metabolism boost, perform strength training at least three days a week, using free weights or resistance bands. And while gaining lots of muscle mass is fine, your main goal is to turn any potentially pudgy areas into lean, mean muscle. To do this, you don't have to necessarily cause your body to get bigger—just fitter. Also, ladies shouldn't be concerned about piling on excess muscle

mass through weight lifting, as they don't typically have the hormones that make it possible to pile on gigantic muscles.

#4: Pack in the Protein

It may be easier to run down the street for a greasy burger or salad, but if you want to beef up your metabolism's ability to function properly, protein-packed lunches and dinners are a must. Along with helping you stay full for a good amount of time, protein requires your body to expend more energy to digest (causing a spike in metabolism) and is also essential to help in your quest for building more lean muscle mass.

How much protein is enough? Ideally, you'll want about 30 grams in each meal every day. This comes out to about 4 ounces of chicken (approximately the size of a deck of playing cards), a cup of low-fat cottage cheese, three-quarters of a cup of tofu, or 4.5 ounces of canned tuna fish.

As for the rest of your meals, some fresh fruit or vegetables will do nicely. In the event fruits and veggies

aren't on hand, just make sure whatever you eat to complement your protein won't turn your otherwise helpful lunch into a gut- and butt-growing meal that makes you want to take a nap instead of hitting the gym to continue increasing your metabolism.

#5: Saw Lots of Zs

While you're sleeping, it is impossible to send e-mails, create charts, or prepare for a big speech you have to give at an upcoming seminar. These downsides don't make sleep your enemy. Rather, sleep is your friend. Because if you don't get enough sleep every night, you can kiss your metabolism-growing ways goodbye.

According to research, a lack of sleep is a key contributor to unwanted pounds. One of the reasons this happens is because sleep deprivation messes with the amount of energy-regulating hormones your body creates. When this happens, your metabolism isn't quite sure what to do. So it slows down.

Of course, the other reason staying up late causes you to put on extra pounds is the tendency to eat late-night snacks. If you've ever partaken of a post-bedtime snack, it probably wasn't a handful of carrot sticks and water, was it?

Instead of putting your body at risk for packing on the pounds and putting your metabolism at a disadvantage, lay down for about eight hours each night. Your entire physical and emotional being will benefit.

#6: Chow Down Frequently

For most people, life revolves around three special times: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Breaking away from the three-a-day routine and trading for smaller, more frequent meals is yet another way to help your metabolism to run full steam ahead.

The reason to consider changing your eating habits is the same reason you should eat breakfast to start your day. By eating throughout the day, your body never fears going without food. As a result, your metabolism is free to push as

hard as possible and burn off all the calories it finds, as there will be more coming in the near future.

When boosting the number of meals you eat, shoot for five a day. Begin your day with a healthy breakfast. A couple hours later, grab a sizeable snack, then a protein-rich lunch, a miniature meal around 3 or 4 p.m., and finish off with a small dinner a couple of hours before bedtime. As strange as it may sound, eating more often will actually result in your eating fewer calories. Eat fewer calories and get your metabolism working harder? Sounds like the perfect recipe for successful weight loss.

#7: Push Hard and Frantic

If the majority of your time working out is spent performing slow and steady exercises and holding a constant pace on the treadmill, your metabolism may not be getting the boost it could with a more varied workout.

In an effort to lend a helping hand to your metabolism, turn your routine into an interval-filled event. Go to the track or pool and sprint for about 10 seconds. Follow this with 15 seconds of light swimming or jogging, and then get to sprinting again.

Every day you do this, your metabolism will grow by leaps and bounds. By the time you're able to do this for 20 minutes, your metabolism will be somewhere in the upper stratosphere, with no intentions of coming down.

Final Word

Now that you know what will boost your metabolism, what are you waiting for? A faster, more efficient calorie-burning metabolism and a thinner, healthier you await!