

Losing Weight - The Metabolism Connection

We have all heard it, “The reason you gain weight as you get older is because your metabolism slows down.” The question then becomes how much do we really understand about our metabolism. What is it? Metabolism describes the efficiency in which your body uses an energy supply to perform physical activity. Another way to look at it is to compare it to the fuel efficiency of your car. How much gas does your car use to travel one-mile or how much food or stored fat does your body need to function. The major difference is that we want our car to use as little gas as possible, but we want our bodies to have a high metabolism and burn off more food or fat and/or calories in order to lose weight.

There are several ways to increase your metabolism, and the safest ways do not come in a bottle. Bottled products often come with significant risk, which are most often associated with adverse effects on your heart, and are not the recommended method for safe weight loss. One of the easiest ways to increase your metabolism is to alter ones eating patterns. Eating well-balanced meals spaced evenly apart can help significantly. As a matter of fact taking the same amount of food you eat in the traditional three meals a day and spacing it out to five meals will keep your



Stay Healthy

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metabolism up. Also it is important to avoid eating later at night when trying to lose weight, because your metabolism slows down as your body begins to prepare for sleep. Thus, without changing the amount you eat, but rather eating smaller meals, and avoiding late night snacks, you could lose weight.

Another effective way to alter your metabolism is to begin an exercise program. Cardiovascular activities like walking or biking will significantly increase your metabolism during the exercise time. In addition, the next three to five hours after a good cardiovascular workout your body will maintain a higher rate of metabolism. It's recommended that a cardiovascular

workout be maintained for at least 60 minutes a week, usually in 10 to 20 minute periods. However, results will improve if you are able to maintain the workout for at least 30 to 45 minutes two to five times a week.

Strength training also helps. Strength training exercises increase the amount of lean muscle tissue in your body. Maintaining more lean muscle requires your body to burn more calories even during less active time. Thus, you will have a higher metabolism during non-active times like watching TV.

If you have questions about exercise or diet, it is always recommended that you consult your local health care professional.

Get educated; get health smart, and live longer and happier.