

3 Eating Habits You Should Break

Some of your daily habits may be hindering your health or weight loss goals. Little things you do throughout the day can either propel you forward or take you back a step, and either way, they add up over time. Consider the following 3 bad habits to determine whether a few easy changes will help you get back on track.

1. Not Planning Meals

Going anywhere without knowing what or when you'll eat is a setup for making unhealthy eating choices. If you know you're going to be out all afternoon, bring a piece of fruit, handful of nuts, a cheese stick, or a bag of crunchy cut-up veggies along with you. This will help you avoid feeling ravenous and being tempted to drive through fast food or grab quick, processed snacks.

Plan what you are going to have for lunch the night before, and if possible, bring your lunch with you to work, to school, or on your daily errands. Plan out your meals and snacks for the week, and head to the grocery store with a list of ingredients. Having a game plan for the week and being prepared will prevent you from being caught off-guard and giving into tempting unhealthy food choices.



2. Rewarding Yourself with Food

Frequently treating yourself with desserts or another food can sabotage your health goals. Justifying a reward for your hard workout at the gym can negate your hard work and hinder your weight loss. If you want to treat yourself, go for a non-food reward like new workout pants, shoes, a massage, or even a pedicure. Practice this technique with children as well, so they do not associate food with reward. Food should nourish the body.

3. Letting Yourself "Starve"

This habit goes along with planning meals. If you know you are going to be away for a long time, or have a busy work day, bring some food with you. When we let ourselves go too long without eating, we are more likely to choose unhealthy foods - and overeat too much of them. Avoid this by eating something small about every 3-4 hours. This will help stabilize blood sugar and prevent blood sugar swings.

Ideally, you should pair a healthy carbohydrate, like a piece of fruit or some vegetables, with a lean protein source to keep blood sugar levels stable. Adding in a moderate amount of heart-healthy fats, like a small handful of nuts or ¼ avocado, with a protein and carbohydrate will also help keep hunger levels down.

Gain Control Lose Weight. Lose Control Gain Weight.

Cal • o • ries

Tiny little creatures that live in your closet and sew your clothes a little tighter every night.

Don't compare yourself to others. Compare yourself to the person you were yesterday.

Be STRONGER Than Your EXCUSES!

Understanding Metabolism: How to Boost Yours with Exercise

The secret to permanent weight loss is training your body to be a more efficient calorie-burning engine by maximizing your metabolism. Metabolism is the rate at which a person burns energy, and this is measured in calories.

What Is Metabolism? There are three parts of metabolism:

1. The Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR) is the amount of energy required to maintain the bodily functions and processes when you are resting and awake. Your RMR comprises about 60% of your total daily caloric needs.

2. The Thermic Effect of Feeding (TEF) is the amount of calories you use to eat and digest food and makes up about 5-10% of total calorie needs.

3. The Thermic Effect of Activity (TEA) is the rate at which you burn calories while exercising and with normal movements. This accounts for about 30% of caloric needs.

Unfortunately, as we age, our metabolic rate slows down. Starting at about age 25, the average and not physically active person's metabolism declines between 5% and 10% per decade, which accumulates to between 20% and 40% metabolism over the adult life span. However, there is good news for those who continue physical activity their whole lives: they have only a 0.3% metabolic decline per decade.

Boosting Your Metabolism

The most effective way to "boost" your metabolism is through **exercise**, especially if you are dieting. Cardio training and weight lifting exercise provides a protective effect against a drop in metabolism. This is because people tend to lose a considerable portion of muscle in calorie-reduction programs that don't include strength training, whereas one of the main benefits from exercise in weight loss programs is the preservation of muscle.

When you increase your muscle, you boost your resting metabolic rate. **Weightlifting** consumes calories, raises your metabolism, and builds muscle that will consume



extra calories later on. This means that all other things being equal, your body will burn more calories even when you are doing nothing. Hunter (2000) did a study in which subjects did resistance training. After 6 months, subjects had increased their RMR and were burning an extra 100 calories per day.

Cardio also boosts metabolism. In a study, participants who did moderate intensity cardio exercise 3-5 days per week for 20-45 minutes for 16 months and had an average increase in RMR of 129 calories per day. (Potteiger 2008).

Including interval cardio training is another powerful method of maximizing your metabolism because it raises your metabolism for several hours after your interval workout. To do an interval workout, do a 5 minute warm up, alternate 2 minutes of moderate intensity cardio with 30 seconds of all-out effort for 10-20 minutes then cool down.

And lastly, **look for situations to be active**. Take several daily 10-15 minute brisk walks and increase your activity by doing things like taking the stairs instead of the elevator. This serves to increase your calorie burn even more. People who are consistently on the go can add 20% to their energy expenditure over the day.

Sources: www.fitday.com, www.newlifestylediets.com