



Metabolism: fact vs. myth

Most people with weight issues tend to blame their metabolism for not being able to shed the kilos. This infamous term has been a curse or a cure-all for some, but we here at Taste & Flavors have laid the metabolism myth to rest and found the answers that are going to change your lifestyle starting today



What is metabolism?

The easiest explanation would be the rate at which your body burns calories into energy. According to Clinical Dietitian and Public Health Practitioner, Joanna Khalil, there are different ways to classify metabolic rate.

Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) is the amount of energy the body burns while at rest. Bodily functions for instance breathing, blood circulation and repairing cells require around two-thirds of an average adult's energy requirements. BMR is influenced by a number of factors: age, gender, heredity, weight, thyroid disorder... Also, the less muscle you have in your body, the slower your metabolism, which is why BMR decreases with age due to the loss of muscle

mass. And men, who generally have a higher BMR than women, do so because they tend to have more muscle tissue.

Total Daily Energy Expenditure (TDEE) includes BMR, plus any physical activity that burns calories, and the digestion of food, which uses around 10% of the calories you have consumed. The key, according to Khalil, is to balance the energy that comes in (food) and out (exercise) of the body. If you want to lose weight but have found it difficult, then you need to eat less or move more, depending on what tipped the scale.

What will increase my metabolism?

If you don't have hypo- or hyperthyroidism, which is only .3% of the population respectively, then it's

Rev up your metabolism

Through exercise

Marcelino Gebrayel, a licensed Zumba®, in all its forms - aqua toning, sentao and zumbatomic - instructor points out the benefits of this fun workout

Zumba is a Latin-based fitness program that involves dance and aerobic elements. It is a great positive motivator. By implementing Latin rhythm, it makes the whole work out a very fun and rewarding experience - the faster the work out, the better the results. Zumba was created in the 90s by the Colombian dancer and choreographer Alberto "Beto" Perez and its choreography incorporates hip-hop, soca, samba, salsa, merengue, mambo and martial arts, as well as some Bollywood and belly dance moves. The music used plays at around 145 beats per minute, making it natural to move around quickly: a true aerobic workout!

In addition to its aerobic benefits, Zumba helps you build endurance and engages your core muscles. Working out or "partying", in the language of Zumba, for prolonged periods at the aforementioned rate, can increase the strength of your heart, allowing you to burn calories deriving from fat. It also increases your oxygen intake helping you maintain a good cardiovascular respiratory system.

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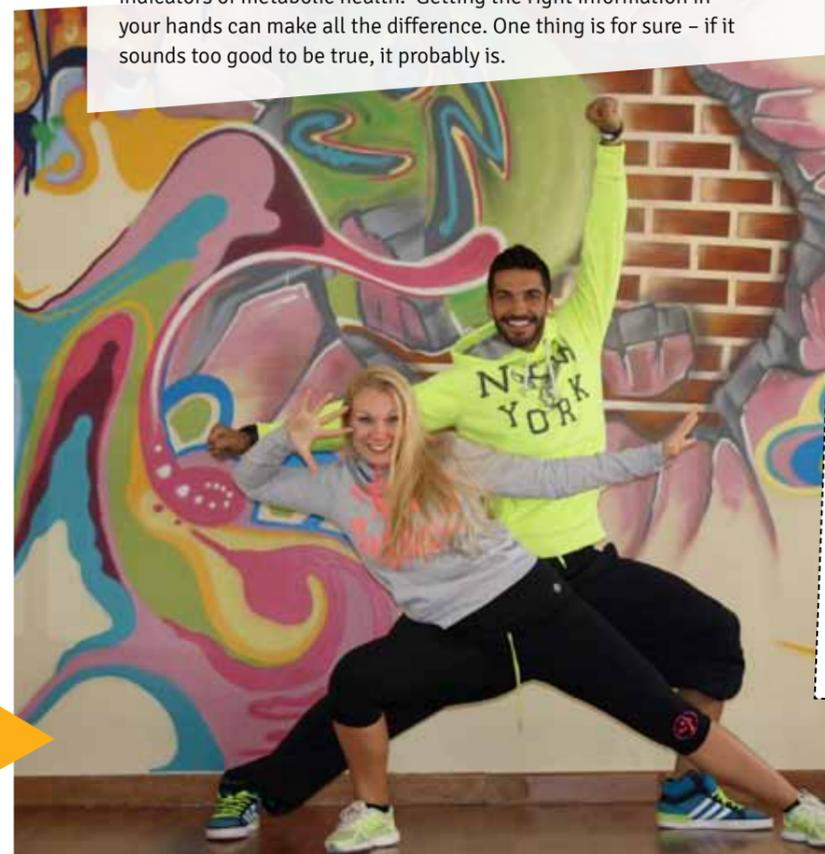
fairly easy to find a solution. "Increase one kilo of muscle and you increase your BMR by 40 calories," according to Khalil. The muscle mass accumulated will help you lose weight naturally and help maintain the weight loss. Muscle requires more energy to function than fat, so it's constantly burning calories even when you're asleep.

It is also important to have "scheduled meals and snacks, i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner, along with snacks during the day, to keep our body active and using up the 10% of the energy to digest food, thus avoiding long periods of fasting and low thermic effect of food."

Myth-buster

For those of you who think being overweight means having a slow metabolism, you couldn't be more wrong. Actually the more weight you carry, the more calories you need in order to keep your body functioning, so your metabolic rate is much faster. It slows down as you lose weight since your body has less mass to carry and thus needs fewer calories to sustain it. Things like eating hot peppers or following fad diets have a minimal, short-term effect on the body. You're more than likely to gain back any weight you've lost, since the kilos shed are mostly water.

The best way to make smart nutritional and training courses is to first take a body composition test, according to Khalil, in order to see where you are and where you would like to go. This non-invasive procedure gives an accurate reading of body fat percentage and hydration levels to determine BMR and other indicators of metabolic health. Getting the right information in your hands can make all the difference. One thing is for sure - if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.



Food & metabolism

Through your intake

Nassib Haddad, owner of 5 A Day, a Lebanese juicing company, explains how juicing can shed those kilos



When your metabolism speeds up, you burn more energy, and as long as you don't eat a lot more, you should lose weight!

So, how do you reboot your metabolic rate? If you get into a juicing routine and eat a partly raw food diet - and stay with it - within a short time, you will increase your metabolism. But that's not all - you will begin feeling incredibly healthy and more energetic.

How can the fresh juice and raw foods diet be beneficial? The most important aspect of raw juices and foods is the energy (biophotons) you derive from the live food. This energy is used rather than stored as fat, which is what tends to happen with a high cooked food and processed foods diet. Raw foods contain plenty of enzymes, which are destroyed during cooking. The plant enzymes join with your own digestive system enzymes to promote the speed of your metabolism - how your body breaks down the nutrients necessary to lose weight and remain energized.

You should always drink a glass of water as soon as you wake up. It jump starts your metabolism and begins flushing toxins. Room-temperature water is best - add a little lemon or cranberry or pomegranate juice to liven it up. Lemon juice reduces bloat and helps detox, cranberry juice flushes toxins and pomegranate is full of antioxidants and energizers.

Detox means to eliminate toxins from your body - toxins from years of poor eating habits, pollutants from the environment, smoking, drinking and stress. The accumulation of these toxins can result in feeling sluggish, not sleeping well and dull skin and hair, as well as excess weight. A detox is also an effective way to increase energy levels, improve your immune system, speedup metabolism and enhance overall health.

A quick and relatively simple 3 to 5 day detoxification program that consists of healthy, fresh, all-natural fruit and vegetable juices is a means to achieve this. It drains the body of impurities and allows for the absorption of vitamins, enzymes and minerals, in raw liquid form. Making healthy choices in your eating habits can also detox your body and boost metabolism.

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