

10 Easy Ways to Boost Your Metabolism (Backed by Science)

Metabolism is a term that describes all the chemical reactions in your body.

These chemical reactions keep your body alive and functioning.

However, the word *metabolism* is often used interchangeably with *metabolic rate*, or the number of calories you burn.

The higher it is, the more calories you burn and the easier it is to lose weight and keep it off.

Having a high metabolism can also give you energy and make you feel better.

Here are 10 easy ways to increase your metabolism.

1. Eat Plenty of Protein at Every Meal

Eating food can increase your metabolism for a few hours.

This is called the thermic effect of food (TEF). It's caused by the extra calories required to digest, absorb and process the nutrients in your meal.

Protein causes the largest rise in TEF. It increases your metabolic rate by 15–30%, compared to 5–10% for carbs and 0–3% for fats (1).

Eating protein has also been shown to help you feel more full and prevent you from overeating.

One small study found that people were likely to eat around 441 fewer calories per day when protein made up 30% of their diet.

Eating more protein can also reduce the drop in metabolism often associated with losing fat. This is because it reduces muscle loss, which is a common side effect of dieting.

SUMMARY Eating more protein can boost your metabolism so that you burn more calories. It can also help you eat less.

2. Drink More Cold Water

People who drink water instead of sugary drinks are more successful at losing weight and keeping it off.

This is because sugary drinks contain calories, so replacing them with water automatically reduces your calorie intake.

However, drinking water may also temporarily speed up your metabolism.

Studies have shown that drinking 17 ounces (0.5 liters) of water increases resting metabolism by 10–30% for about an hour.

This calorie-burning effect may be even greater if you drink cold water, as your body uses energy to heat it up to body temperature.

Water can also help fill you up. Studies show that drinking water a half an hour before you eat can help you eat less.

One study of overweight adults found that those who drank half a liter of water before their meals lost 44% more weight than those who didn't (19).

SUMMARY Water can help you lose weight and keep it off. It increases your metabolism and helps fill you up before meals.

3. Do a High-Intensity Workout

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) involves quick and very intense bursts of activity.

It can help you burn more fat by increasing your metabolic rate, even after your workout has finished.

This effect is believed to be greater for HIIT than for other types of exercise. What's more, HIIT has also been shown to help you burn fat.

One study in overweight young men found that 12 weeks of high-intensity exercise reduced fat mass by 4.4 pounds (2 kg) and belly fat by 17%.

SUMMARY Mixing up your exercise routine, and adding in a few high-intensity workouts, can boost your metabolism and help you burn fat.

4. Lift Heavy Things

Muscle is more metabolically active than fat, and building muscle can help increase your metabolism.

This means you will burn more calories each day, even at rest.

Lifting weights will also help you retain muscle and combat the drop in metabolism that can occur during weight loss.

In one study, 48 overweight women were placed on a diet of 800 calories per day, along with either no exercise, aerobic exercise or resistance training.

After the diet, the women who did the resistance training maintained their muscle mass, metabolism and strength. The others lost weight, but also lost muscle mass and experienced a decrease in metabolism.

You can find weights to incorporate into your workout [online](#).

SUMMARYLifting weights is important for building and retaining muscle. Higher amounts of muscle will result in a higher metabolism.

5. Stand up More

[Sitting too much](#) is bad for your health.

Some health commentators have even dubbed it "the new smoking." This is partly because long periods of sitting burn fewer calories and can lead to weight gain.

In fact, compared to sitting, an afternoon of standing up at work can burn an extra 174 calories.

If you have a desk job, try standing up for short periods to break up the length of time you spend sitting down. You can also invest in a [standing desk](#).

You can find standing desk kits and setups [online](#).

SUMMARYSitting for a long time burns few calories and is bad for your health. Try to stand up regularly or invest in a standing desk.

6. Drink Green Tea or Oolong Tea

[Green tea](#) and oolong tea have been shown to increase metabolism by 4–5%:

These teas help convert some of the fat stored in your body into free fatty acids, which may increase fat burning by 10–17%.

As they are low in calories, drinking these teas may be good for both weight loss and weight maintenance.

It's thought their metabolism-boosting properties may help prevent the dreaded weight loss plateau that occurs due to a decrease in metabolism.

However, some studies find that these teas do not affect metabolism. Therefore, their effect may be small or only apply to some people.

You can find [green tea](#) and [oolong tea](#) online.

SUMMARY Drinking green tea or oolong tea may increase your metabolism. These teas may also help you lose weight and keep it off.

7. Eat Spicy Foods

Peppers contain capsaicin, a substance that can boost your metabolism.

However, many people can't tolerate these spices at the doses required to have a significant effect.

One study of capsaicin, at acceptable doses, predicted that eating peppers would burn around 10 additional calories per meal. Over 6.5 years, this could account for 1 pound (0.5 kg) of weight loss for an average-weight male.

Alone, the effects of adding spices to your food may be quite small. However, it may lead to a slight advantage when combined with other metabolism-boosting strategies.

SUMMARY Eating spicy food could be beneficial for boosting your metabolism and help you maintain a healthy weight.

8. Get a Good Night's Sleep

Lack of [sleep](#) is linked to a major increase in the risk of obesity.

This may partly be caused by the negative effects of sleep deprivation on metabolism.

Lack of sleep has also been linked to increased blood sugar levels and insulin resistance, which are both linked to a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

It's also been shown to boost the hunger hormone ghrelin and decrease the fullness hormone leptin.

This could explain why many people who are sleep-deprived feel hungry and struggle to lose weight.

SUMMARYLack of sleep can decrease the number of calories you burn, change the way you process sugar and disrupt your appetite-regulating hormones.

9. Drink Coffee

Studies have shown that the caffeine in coffee can boost metabolism by 3–11%. Like green tea, it also promotes fat burning.

However, this seems to affect lean people more. In one study, coffee increased fat burning by 29% for lean women, but only 10% for obese women.

Coffee's effects on metabolism and fat burning may also contribute to successful weight loss and maintenance.

SUMMARYDrinking coffee can significantly increase your metabolism and help you lose weight.

10. Replace Cooking Fats With Coconut Oil

Unlike other saturated fats, coconut oil is relatively high in medium-chain fats.

Medium-chain fats can increase your metabolism more than the long-chain fats found in foods like butter.

In one study, researchers found that medium-chain fats increased metabolism by 12% compared to long-chain fats, which raised it by just 4%.

Due to the unique fatty acid profile of coconut oil, replacing some of your other cooking fats with it may have modest benefits for weight loss.

You can find coconut oil online.

SUMMARY Replacing other cooking fats with coconut oil may help boost your metabolism slightly.

The Bottom Line

Making small lifestyle changes and incorporating these tips into your routine can increase your metabolism.

Having a higher metabolism can help you lose weight and keep it off, while also giving you more energy.

