

How to Support Optimal Metabolism

Metabolism is the sum of chemical reactions that take place within each cell of our bodies to provide energy for vital processes. Metabolism is influenced by several key factors including sex, age, body size, body composition, and more.

To support metabolism, focus on habits within our control such as what we eat, how we move our bodies, and how we choose personal products.

Choose a balance of macronutrients.

Macronutrients are proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Each nutrient is digested and then carried to cells. The body either utilizes these substances immediately for energy or stores them in adipose (fat) tissue, muscle tissue, or in the liver. Select a variety of foods at each meal.



Make smart protein choices.

Of the macronutrients, protein requires the most energy in terms of digestion. Protein is found in foods such as meat, fish, eggs, dairy, legumes including tofu, nuts, and seeds. Legumes in particular are being studied for potential metabolism-supporting properties. Choose adequate protein at each meal.



Select key food and drinks.

A variety of foods and drinks have been studied for potential effects on metabolism. These include broccoli, ginger, spices, tea, and coffee. More research is needed in this area. Our overall way of eating and other lifestyle habits influence metabolism more than any one single nutrient, food, or drink.



Drink water, coffee, and tea.



Drinking water, coffee, and tea may have beneficial effects on metabolism. More research is needed. Hydrate with unsweetened versions of these fluids for overall health.

Get regular exercise.

Being physically active requires energy. Therefore, the higher rate of activity, the higher metabolic rate and energy required. Engage in a minimum of 150 minutes per week of moderately intense physical activity, including at least two full-body strength training sessions. Strength training supports favorable metabolism.



Limit/avoid endocrine-disrupting chemicals.



Endocrine-disrupting chemicals are found in everyday products including detergents and cosmetics. There is limited scientific evidence about the impact of these chemicals on the body. However, some research suggests that long-term exposure to endocrine disruptors may affect metabolism.

Get adequate sleep (7-9 hours).

Inadequate sleep patterns have been shown to slow overall metabolic rate and impact weight management. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Engage in a bedtime routine that includes screen-free rest. Make the bedroom cool and dark. Wear comfortable clothes.



Four Food-Related Toxins to Avoid

BPA

BPA (bisphenol A) is an endocrine-disrupting chemical.

- Use stainless steel, glass, or aluminum for water bottles and food storage.
- Use alternatives to plastic wrap.
- Choose BPA-free canned goods.
- Brew coffee in a glass French press instead of a percolator.
- Keep plastic out of the dishwasher, freezer, and microwave.



Pesticides

Repeated exposure to pesticides may contribute to health problems.

- Choose organic produce when possible.
- Remove some pesticides by washing produce under running water.



Food Dyes

Regular intake of foods with dyes have been linked to health problems.

- Look for foods with natural dyes like fruit and vegetable extracts.
- Limit or avoid ultra processed foods.
- Emphasize balanced choices.



Heavy Metals

Even at low levels of exposure, heavy metals are associated with organ damage.

- Avoid fish with the highest mercury levels such as swordfish, bigeye tuna, shark, marlin, orange roughy, and King mackerel.
- Reduce the amount of arsenic in rice by rinsing dry rice multiple times and cooking in a large water:rice ratio.

