

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT – THE BASICS

Despite the way it feels, losing weight isn't a mysterious process. It's a simple matter of burning more calories than you eat. But, if it were really that simple, none of us would have a weight problem, would we? Weight loss can be such a struggle that we start thinking we have to do something drastic to see results -- diets, pills or those weird fitness gadgets on infomercials that promise instant success. The true secret to weight loss is this: Make small changes each and every day and you'll slowly (but surely) lose those extra pounds. The key is to forget about instant results and settle in for the long run.

Calories -- knowing how to find them, how to count them and how to cut them, are key to lose weight on your own. Calorie counting is easy and effective. This article will help you understand what you need to know about calories.

The first step to losing weight by counting calories is to understand what a calorie is and how it applies to your weight. A calorie is a unit of measurement that measures the amount of energy contained in a food or beverage.

Your body uses caloric energy to perform everything from basic biological functions to typing on your keyboard or jogging around the block. We all have a certain caloric requirement needed to maintain our current weight; if you eat fewer -- or burn more -- calories than that, you will eventually lose weight. This is called a caloric deficit.

Rules of Weight Loss

A good rule of thumb is that a caloric deficit of 3,500 calories leads to a weight loss of approximately one pound. That sounds like a lot of calories and you certainly wouldn't want to try to burn 3500 calories in one day. However, by taking it step-by-step, you can determine just what you need to do each day to burn or cut out those extra calories. ***If you simply cut back 500 calories or burn 500 extra calories a day in one week you would have created a calorie deficit of 3500 and lose one pound in a week!***

Below is a step by step process for getting started.

1. Calculate your BMR (basal metabolic rate). Your BMR is what your body needs to maintain normal functions like breathing and digestion. This is the minimum number of calories you need to eat each day. Keep in mind that no calculator will be 100% accurate, so you may need to adjust these numbers as you go along.
2. Calculate your activity level. Use a calorie calculator to figure out how many calories you burn while sitting, standing, exercising, lifting weights, etc. throughout the day. It helps to keep a daily activity journal or you could even wear a heart rate monitor that calculates calories burned.
3. Keep track of how many calories you eat. You can use a site like fitday.com or use a food journal to write down what you eat and drink each day. Be as accurate as possible, measuring when you need to or looking up nutritional information for restaurants, if you eat out.
4. Add it up. Take your BMR number, add your activity calories and then subtract your food calories from that total. If you're eating more than you're burning, (your BMR + activity is 2000 and you're eating 2400 calories) you'll gain weight. If you're burning more than you eat, you'll lose weight.

Example:

Mary's BMR is 1400 calories and she burns 900 calories in daily activity with regular exercise, walking around and doing household chores. To maintain her weight, she should be eating 2300 calories but, after keeping a food journal, Mary finds that she's eating 2550 calories every day. By eating 250 more calories than her body needs, Mary will gain one pound every 2 weeks.

This example shows how easy it is to gain weight without even knowing it. However, it's also easy to lose weight, even if the process itself can be slow. You can start by making small changes in your diet and activity levels and immediately start burning more calories than you're eating. If you can find a way to burn an extra 200 to 500 calories each day with both exercise and diet, you're on the right track. Try these ideas:

Instead of...	Do this...
An afternoon Coke	Drink a glass of water. (calories saved: 97)
An Egg McMuffin	Eat a small whole wheat bagel +1 Tbsp of peanut butter (calories saved: 185)
Using your break eat sweets	Walk up and down a flight of stairs for 10 minutes (calories burned: 100)
Hitting the snooze button	Get up 10 minutes early and go for a brisk walk (calories burned: 100)
Watching TV after work	Do 10 minutes of yoga (calories burned: 50)

Total Calories Saved: 532 (based on a 140-pound person)

How Much Exercise Do I Need?

Exercise is an important weight loss tool, but how much you need varies from person to person. The ACSM's weight loss guidelines suggest at least 250 minutes per week, which comes out to about 50 minutes, 5 days a week. If you're a beginner, start small (3 days a week for 20 to 30 minutes) to give your body time to adapt. Don't forget, things like walking, taking the stairs and household chores can burn more calories as well.

Calorie Worksheet

Target weight _____

Calorie Intake for weight loss _____

How many 100 calorie snacks per day would you like to do? ____ × 100 = ____ Calorie intake - calories from snacks = edible calories for meals _____

How much water per day should you drink for optimal weight loss? _____

Take your current weight and divide by 2 and that will equal the amount of ounces per day you should be drinking.

One half of your total protein intake divided by two is equal to the amount of soy protein you should get per day - e.g. total protein per day

= _____ ÷ 2 = _____

How many grams of soy protein should you get per day? _____

Snacks: How they fit into your weight-loss plan

Well-planned, healthy snacks can complement your weight-loss plan. Here are creative and healthy ways to satisfy your hunger.

Your stomach is growling, but lunch is hours away. You could indulge yourself with a snack, but you think it's best to avoid treats altogether and wait for lunch. Not so, if weight loss is your goal.

Though you may feel guilty about snacking, snacks aren't necessarily bad. In fact, mini meals several times a day can help manage hunger and reduce bingeing. Eating a healthy snack of low-fat crackers or fruit may stop you from taking second or third helpings at your next meal, dramatically cutting the calories you consume. Also, healthy meals often lose out to busy schedules. A grab-and-go snack could be the difference between some nourishment and none at all.

The key to incorporating snacks into your weight-loss plan is to plan them with variety, moderation and balance in mind. Choose healthy snacks.

100 Snacks with 100 Calories or Less

Here is a list of snack items to fit every craving. Remember, while some of the foods listed here are not the healthiest choice, all foods can fit in moderation.

Fruits

Fresh apple	1 ¼ cups watermelon
Fresh orange	1 ¼ cups cantaloupe
Small banana	1 ¼ cups honeydew melon
Fresh peach	1 ¼ cups fresh pineapple
Fresh pear	½ cup canned fruit (in light syrup)
Fresh plum	½ cup applesauce
25 grapes	¼ cup dried cranberries (Craisins®)
25 cherries	¼ cup (mini box) raisins
1 ½ cup mixed berries	¼ cup dried fruit

Meats

1 hardboiled egg	1 ounce beef jerky
7 small shrimp	1 ounce turkey pepperoni
3 thin slices lunch meat	

Vegetables

Up to 2 cups raw vegetables (carrots, broccoli, celery, cucumber, sugar snap peas) with 2 tablespoons light ranch dressing	3 tablespoons hummus with 1 cup raw vegetables
2 cups salad greens with 2 tablespoons light dressing	30 pods edamame
	¼ cup salsa with 10 baked tortilla chips
	1 tablespoon peanut butter with 1 cup celery

Starches

8 saltine crackers	Cheerios®, Life®)
25 oyster crackers	1 Quaker Chewy® granola bar
10 Baked Lays® chips (any flavor)	1 package Quaker® granola bites (cinnamon, peanut butter or chocolate)
40 Goldfish® crackers (any flavors)	4 cups light buttered popcorn
6 Ritz® crackers	1 package Lipton® Cup-a-Soup (any flavor)
8 reduced fat Ritz® crackers	¾ cup Campbell's® chicken noodle soup
5 Triscuits®	½ cup tomato soup
6 reduced fat Triscuits®	1 cup Campbell's® 98% fat free cream of mushroom soup
8 mini peanut butter or cheese Ritz® crackers	3 Totinos® pizza rolls
18 mini pretzel twists	1 slice whole wheat toast with 1 teaspoon Smart Balance Light® spread
5 chocolate graham crackers	Any 100 calorie pack (such as Cheese Nips)
6 honey graham crackers	
½ cup Chex® mix	
¾ cup dry cereal (such as Kix®,	

Dairy Products

1 cup fat free or skim milk	½ cup fat free pudding
½ cup reduced fat chocolate milk	1 ounce/slice reduced fat cheese (American, Swiss, cheddar, colby, etc.)
6 ounces light yogurt	1 ounce/slice string cheese
1 Dannon® Light & Fit® yogurt smoothie	½ cup low fat cottage cheese

Nuts/Seeds

15 almonds	3 tablespoons wasabi peas
8 cashews	2 tablespoons sunflower seeds
16 peanuts	2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
10 pistachios	1 tablespoon peanut butter
10 walnuts	

Herbalife Snack Options:

Beverage Mix 70 Calories with 15g of Protein
Soup Mix 80 Calories with 16g of Protein

Natural Tips For Boosting Your Metabolism

Most people would like to be in better shape. A better shape, that is, than round. There are a lot of factors that play into how a person looks or how fit they are. One factor is exercise. Another is diet.

You've heard all of this before, and while it's true that you need to have an overall fitness plan and nutritional goals, there are things that you can do now to make those goals a little bit easier to attain. Certainly nothing will replace a sound diet and exercise routine. There is no magic formula that you can take that will suddenly turn you into a supermodel, but I hope you can benefit from the tips and tricks that I'm about to share.

The Key to Your Metabolism

The key to a fitter, healthier you lies in your metabolism and how clean your internal body is. Metabolism is a biochemical process that governs how quickly you turn calories into energy.

You use energy and burn fat when you are doing physical activity and digesting food, but you also continue to burn fat even while you are at rest. The rate at which you burn fat when you are resting is called your basal metabolic rate (BMR). There are actually ways to speed it up so that you can burn fat faster even when you're not doing much.

Every coin has two sides, and the flipside of speeding up your metabolism is slowing it down. You might be doing things that slow down your metabolism and allow your body to store excess fat without even realizing it. Some of the things that slow your metabolism down are:

- **Eating Poorly** – Quit the sodas and snack cakes! Treats are fine; just make them organic, healthy, natural foods. Avoid high processed fat foods.
- **Not Enough Sleep** – If your body is exhausted then the efficiency with which it burns calories goes down the toilet. A well rested body is more efficient.
- **Being Stressed Out** – Stress causes high levels of a hormone called cortisol in your body, which leads to belly fat. Relax and let go...of the extra pounds!
- **A Toxic Body** – The accumulation of toxins in the body slows down the metabolism because the body has to work extra hard to eliminate these toxins on a daily basis. I suggest performing a colon cleanse, liver gallbladder cleanse or harmful organism cleanse to rev up your metabolism in a natural way.

There are factors that affect your metabolism that are beyond even your control. Metabolism naturally slows down as you age, especially in women.

Some people are the victims of an under-active thyroid, adrenal burnout or unfortunate family genetics that lead to weight gain, but there are still ways to speed up your metabolism, even if you have a horrible diet and are genetically predisposed to carrying more weight than you would like.

What's the best way to speed up your metabolism? You guessed it-exercise!

Exercise Tips to Speed Up Your Metabolism

1. **Exercise!** It doesn't matter whether you cycle, swim, walk or jog, but do something to get yourself moving. A regular exercise routine is best, but remember to make slight changes to it once in awhile so your body doesn't reach a plateau and stop improving. Ten minutes out of your busy day may not seem like a lot when you're first starting out, but if you exercise for 10 minutes, six days this week, that's an hour more workout that you did last week! As you and your family get used to your routine it will become easier and easier to increase 10 minutes to 12, 15 and 20 minutes per day. I recommend re-bounding. It is easy safe and very effective.
2. **Bulk up & Tone up!** If you work on building up some lean muscle mass with weight training then you are guaranteed to burn more calories than just by doing cardio alone. Why? Because muscle burns calories for you even when you're at rest-it raises your BMR to help you burn fat!
3. **Do Intervals.** When you do interval training, for example if you jog for 12 minutes total, but every 2 minutes you increase your speed to a hard run for 1 minute, your body is working a lot harder, so you get a more intense workout.
4. **Get Up!** Stand up from your desk and walk around the office, go up and down the stairs a few times, park farther away or play with the dog. If you use these little bursts of energy throughout the day then your metabolism will stay revved up and you'll keep burning more calories.

10 Foods to raise your metabolism

Here are 10 foods that will increase your metabolism and help you lose weight. Stoke your metabolic fire and burn calories faster with diet-friendly foods and beverages. Post this list on your fridge next to the photo of you in your “skinny jeans” and make a copy to bring with you the next time you shop for groceries.

Just remember: Calories count, portion control rules and there’s no substitute for a well-balanced diet and regular exercise. So get moving!

Here are the top picks culled from some of the latest research:

1. **Water!** A new study seems to indicate that drinking water actually speeds up weight loss. Researchers in Germany found that subjects of the study increased their metabolic rates (the rate at which calories are burned) by 30 percent after drinking approximately 17 ounces of water. Water is also a natural appetite suppressant that banishes bloat as it flushes out sodium and toxins. Drinking enough water will also help keep you from mistaking thirst for hunger. So drink up! Make sure that you are starting your day with a big big glass of water and drink throughout the day not just all at one time.

2. **Green Tea!** Studies show that green tea extract boosts metabolism and may aid in weight loss. This mood-enhancing tea has also been reported to contain anti-cancer properties and help prevent heart disease. It’s also a trendy drink among weight-conscious celebrities.

3. **Soup!** Eat less and burn fat faster by having a bowl of soup as an appetizer or a snack. According to a Penn State University study, soup is a super appetite suppressant because it’s made up of a hunger-satisfying combination of liquids and solids. In the study, women chose one of three 270-calorie snacks before lunch. Women who had chicken and rice soup as a snack consumed an average of 100 fewer calories than those in the study who opted for a chicken and rice casserole or the casserole and a glass of water. I used to joke that soup is not a meal but it really does fill you for very few calories and remember that when you eat a food with a lot of taste it really will satisfy.

4. **Grapefruit!** The grapefruit diet is not a myth. Researchers at Scripps Clinic found that participants who ate half a grapefruit with each meal in a 12-week period lost an average of 3.6 pounds. The study indicates that the unique chemical properties in this vitamin C-packed citrus fruit reduce insulin levels, which promotes weight loss. NOTE: If you are taking medication, check with your doctor about any potentially adverse interactions with grapefruit. Grapefruit, because of the soft peel is a nice alternative to an apple or orange and study after study of the last 30 years has shown that it can really help burn fat.

5. **Apples and Pears!** Overweight women who ate the equivalent of three small apples or pears a day lost more weight on a low-calorie diet than women who didn’t add fruit to their diet, according to researchers from the State University of Rio de Janeiro. Fruit eaters also ate fewer calories overall. So next time you need to satisfy a sugar craving, reach for this low-calorie, high-fiber snack. You’ll feel full longer and eat less.

6. **Broccoli!** Study after study links calcium and weight loss. Broccoli is not only high in calcium, but also loaded with vitamin C, which boosts calcium absorption. This member of the nutritious cabbage family also has plenty of vitamin A, folate and fiber. And, at just 20-calories per cup, this weight-loss superfood not only fights fat but also contains powerful phytochemicals that boost your immunity and protect against disease.

7. **Low-Fat Yogurt!** Dairy products can boost weight loss efforts, according to a study in the April issue of Obesity Research. People on a reduced-calorie diet who included three to four servings of dairy foods lost significantly more weight than those who ate a low-dairy diet containing the same number of calories. Low-fat yogurt is a rich source of weight-loss-friendly calcium, providing about

450 mg (about half the recommended daily allowance for women ages 19-50) per 8-ounce serving, as well as 12 grams of protein. As far as superfood go Yogurt is right there. It includes calcium, protein and a ton of other nutrients as well as good bacteria for you digestive tract.

8. **Lean Turkey!** Rev up your fat-burning engine with this bodybuilder favorite. Countless studies have shown that protein can help boost metabolism, lose fat and build lean muscle tissue so you burn more calories. A 3-ounce serving of boneless, skinless lean turkey breast weighs in at 120 calories and provides 26 grams of appetite-curbing protein, 1 gram of fat and 0 grams of saturated fat. With the price of chicken going up and up these days Turkey has become a great alternative. Remember that Turkey is a little tougher than chicken and the taste is a little different but it is not just for Thanksgiving and Christmas anymore.

9. **Oatmeal!** This heart-healthy favorite ranks high on the good carb list, because it's a good source of cholesterol-fighting, fat-soluble fiber (7 grams per 3/4-cup serving) that keeps you full and provides you with the energy you need to make the most of your workouts. Just be sure to choose steel cut or rolled oats, not instant oatmeal, to get your full dose of vitamins, minerals and fiber. It is amazingly high in nutrients.

10. **Hot Peppers!** Eating hot peppers can speed up your metabolism and cool your cravings, researchers at Laval University in Canada found. Here's why: Capsaicin (a chemical found in jalapeno and cayenne peppers) temporarily stimulates your body to release more stress hormones, which speeds up your metabolism and causes you to burn more calories.

Here's how these 10 fat-blasting superstars help you lose weight:

- Each of these healthy weight-loss boosters fills you up and keeps you full longer on fewer calories.
- Water-rich fresh fruits, veggies and soup dilute the calories in your food and allow you to eat more without breaking the calorie bank.
- High-fiber fruit, vegetables and nutritious whole grains keep your digestive system on track and steady insulin levels, which prevents fat storage.
- Lean meat boosts metabolism and burns calories because it take more energy to digest than other foods.

5 Food groups that can slow down your metabolism

In last couple pages, we discussed food groups that can help you boost your metabolic rate. Diet is a very important aspect of keeping your metabolism high and eating the right food is a big step in the right direction. However, you also have to make sure that you are avoiding foods which may hinder your success. In this article you will learn the five food groups that can seriously slow down your metabolic rate.

1) SUGAR:- Eating too much sugar overloads your body and causes your blood sugar levels to rise rapidly. This in turn makes your body go into conservation mode meaning that you will store extra fat and burn less calories. To make sure this does not happen you need to reduce your intake of refined sugars as much as possible. That means cutting down on the candy, chocolate, cakes and cookies as much as possible. If you still want something sweet try eating some fruit. Unlike refined sugars, most fruits contain fructose which does not cause your blood sugar levels to rise.

2) WHITE BREAD:- White bread is made from wheat flour which then has the bran and germ removed. White bread is bleached to remove any yellow color which destroys many of the vitamins contained in the wheat plus it is full of sugar. This means that it is very easily digested, has a low nutritional value and is low in dietary fiber. When processing white bread your body burns very few calories and it also causes your blood sugar levels to rise. I know you have probably heard it many times before but by substituting white bread for a whole wheat or whole grains variety you can really

boost your metabolic rate. Whole wheat and Whole Grains bread is harder to digest (so burns more calories whilst being processed), has a greater nutritional value and most importantly does not cause your blood sugar levels to rise in an uncontrolled way.

3) FRIED FOODS:- Like white bread, fried foods are very low in nutritional value and easy to digest. They are also very high in calories and full of saturated fats. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature, generally come from an animal source, make your body produce more cholesterol and slow down your metabolic rate. You really need to avoid fried foods for the sake of both your metabolism and your health. Next time you are craving fried food such as a beef burger why not replace this with a slice of grilled, lean beef on brown bread? Not only will it be better for you but I think it tastes a lot nicer too.

4) PROCESSED FOODS:- Processed foods include ready meals, crisps and chocolate bars. They are very popular because they are quick and convenient but guess what? The vast majority are also lacking in nutritional value, contain dangerous trans fats and are high in chemical preservatives. Again this combination of factors in processed foods means that they reduce your metabolic rate. I know that it can be very tempting to opt for processed foods when you want something to eat after a long, hard day but your body will really thank you if you take the time to cook something healthier. If time really is an issue then why not try cooking in large batches and freezing the leftovers? This will mean that you will still have access to quick, convenient foods when you are in a rush BUT they will be healthy.

5) ALCOHOL:- Alcohol is full of sugar and calories which (as you probably know by now) restrict your metabolic rate. Alcohol is also known to have a dehydrating effect and if you are not fully hydrated your metabolism does not work as effectively. Moderate consumption of alcohol is not going to have a huge effect on your hydration levels but excessive consumption will. For most of us there are going to be times when we over indulge on alcohol so I am not going to advise you to give up alcoholic beverages. However, you should make an effort to reduce the amount you are drinking.

12 Tips to boost your metabolism

There are a lot of people who would give a great deal to increase their metabolic process.

Having a high level of metabolism enables one to burn off fat and lose weight quickly with the smallest amount of activity. **Metabolism** is the rate by which the human body produces and consumes energy and calories to sustain life.

There are various elements that impact the metabolism of a individual, such as the amount of muscle tissue, the relative frequency of the meals one eats, genetics, stress levels, personal diet and activeness levels. Metabolism decelerates due to the following: loss of muscular tissue because of not enough physical activity, the tendency of the body to cannibalize its own tissue since there is not adequate food energy to sustain it, and the drop-off of physical activity that comes of course with old age.

Here are several formulas to wake one's metabolism:

1. Build up on lean, mean body mass.

It's only natural that metabolism lessens along with age, but it's possible to counter the results. The amount of muscle a individual has is a very strong determining factor in the ability to burn calories and drop fatty tissue. Muscles burn calories even when you're resting. For every pound of muscle you add, you burn about 50 extra calories a day without taking any more exercise. So it's a great idea to include some resistance or weight training in your exercise regime. Twenty minutes three

times a week is enough to make a big difference in your metabolic rate as well as the shape of your body.

So it goes without saying that exercise is of the essence. Build strength and resistance by exercising at the least twice a week, preferably with weights. Do easy exercises in between workouts. Simple projects such as walking the dog and using the stairs in stead of the elevator can already take off calories. The key is to match the amount of eating to the amount of activity one has. Here are some rules of thumb in getting the correct exercise:

For strength training

- Increase the amount of repetitions of a specific exercise - Add the level of resistance
- Employ advanced workout techniques whenever possible

For cardiovascular training

- Insert intervals between exercises –
- Do cross-training and combine the exercises - Add up on resistance and speed

Walk it off! If you prefer to take light exercise, try going for a walk after lunch or dinner. This boosts the rise in metabolism you get after eating. No strenuous exercising on a full stomach though.

2. Eat breakfast.

Many people are discounting the truth that **breakfast is the most significant meal of the day**. Your metabolism slows down overnight. When you have been through a period of more than eight hours without eating you need food to get your metabolism going again. So have breakfast as soon as you can after you wake up. If you're not a breakfast person take something healthy with you when you leave the house and have it is soon as you can face it. It's not great for your weight loss plans to have to boost your metabolism with a mid morning cookie or cake. Amazingly, the ones who eat breakfast are thinner than the ones who don't. Metabolic process can slow down substantially if breakfast is taken during mid-morning or if one waits until the afternoon to eat.

3. Avoid refined sugar.

Sugar enables the body to store fat. It is recommended that a person eats food that helps maintain an even level of blood-sugar. In addition, progressive exercise 2-3 times a week should be called for to stabilize blood sugar.

4. Consume spicy foods.

Hot cuisine with peppers can increase metamorphosis. Spicy foods (especially chilli) raise the metabolism by as much as twenty-five per cent for a few hours after eating. So eat hot and spicy food a bit more regularly and see if this helps you. Just go easy on the refried beans and guacamole if you decide to go Mexican!

5. Sleep more.

According to research, it's riskier for people who don't get enough sleep to gain weight. Also, muscles are rejuvenated during the last couple of hours of sleep.

6. Increase your water consumption.

Water purges out toxins that are brought about whenever the body burns fat. The majority of bodily process* involves water, and lack of water causes the body system's operations to lessen its speed, and produces unnecessary stress as a result.

7. Eat little and more often!

It's advisable to eat 4 to 6 small meals that are timed 2 to 3 hours apart. Small and regular meals throughout the day will keep your metabolism high. If you eat the same amount of food in just one or two large meals as you do in five or six mini-meals and snacks you will burn fewer calories. This is because your metabolism slows down between meals. Never skip meals to save calories. People tend to skip meals in order to slim down, which is a bad mistake since it slows down metabolism.

Having a low-calorie snack will work much better and will also stop you falling ravenously on the nearest chocolate bar later in the day.

8. Eat lean protein

It takes more energy for the body to digest protein than carbohydrate or fat. Studies have shown that people who eat a high-protein diet burn more than twice as many calories in the hours following their meal as those eating a high carbohydrate diet. While the safety of high-protein diets can be disputed, it does make sense to include some lean protein as part of each meal.

9. Plan meals in detail.

Always cook the correct quantity of food to be ingested at the assigned intervals. Do not commit the error of eating meals in sporadic patterns.

9. Get rid of the stress!

Stress, be it physical or emotional, triggers the release of a steroid called cortisol, which decreases metabolic process. Also, people tend to eat excessively when stressed.

10. Go hot or cold

Any extremes of temperature you experience will help raise your metabolism by up to 20 percent as the body attempts to cool you down or raise your temperature. Make sure it's safe for you to go in the sauna or on the arctic expedition though before you try this one. You could have a go at keeping your home a few degrees cooler than is comfortable for sitting around in winter and restrict the air conditioning to the very hottest days in summer. In the winter it will help you get up and get moving and in summer encourage you to go to the pool to cool off!

11. Drink more green tea.

It can be used as a replacement for coffee. Tea has the power to stimulate metabolism, and unlike coffee, it has no undesirable side effects when a lot is ingested. The phytochemicals in green tea are supposed to raise metabolism slightly by causing your brain and nervous system to run more quickly. Although not many sizable and conclusive studies have been done on this to date, drinking green tea rather than milky coffee or other calorie-laden beverages will help you lose weight!

12. Include a lot of energy foods in the diet, such as fruits and veggies, beans and whole grains.

Food with lots of fibre also gives your thermic metabolism a boost. High-fibre foods like beans, fruit, vegetables and whole grains simply take longer to digest and therefore help burn more calories.

Attaining the desired body weight is never out of the question if one has the determination and patience called for to stabilize the metabolism level, which plays an crucial role in **weight loss**. A person needs to recognize that eating correctly and working out is not just a passing fancy, but a way of life.

Health Benefits of Green Tea

For centuries, doctors, healers and tea drinkers have known that green tea possesses remarkable healing properties. Today, after decades of research, it's become apparent that green tea truly is a "steaming cup of medicine." The results of hundreds of studies performed by top scientists at leading universities and research centers demonstrate that green tea, even in moderate amounts, may help ward off or combat a variety of ailments by:

- **Boosting the immune system**
- **Regulating cholesterol levels**
- **Fighting the build-up of sticky plaque in the arteries**
- **Interfering with the cancer process**
- **Assisting in weight loss**
- **Fighting harmful bacteria and viruses**
- **Protecting the body against free radical damage**

What is Green Tea?

Tea is a hot water infusion made from the leaves of the *camellia sinensis* bush. The way the leaves are processed determines whether the result is green, black or oolong tea. For green tea, the leaves are steamed or pan-fired immediately after picking to prevent them from fermenting. For black tea, the leaves are crushed and left to wither to encourage fermentation. For oolong, the leaves are withered for a shorter time, so they become only partially fermented.

Unfermented tea leaves contain large amounts of *catechins*, which are the powerful antioxidants and disease fighters responsible for green tea's many health benefits. And while you can find some catechins in black and oolong tea, they're found in much larger quantities in green tea. It's the quick processing of green tea that keeps the catechins in place. When tea leaves are allowed to ferment, the catechins convert to another form that doesn't have nearly as many health benefits. There are five types of catechins, but the most potent is epigallocatechin gallate (EGCg, for short).

Most studies have concluded that you need 3-10 cups of green tea per day, or up to 1,000 mg. of catechins for maximum health benefits. (The average 6-ounce cup of green tea contains between 50 and 100 mg catechins.)

What Can Green Tea Do For Your Health

A wealth of laboratory, animal and human studies has provided evidence that green tea can help promote heart health, ward off cancer, fight obesity, lessen free radical damage to the cells, and even slow the progression of age-related cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease. Samples of some interesting findings:

Green Tea and Cholesterol

Many researchers believe that green tea helps reduce cholesterol by lowering its absorption in the digestive tract and increasing its excretion.

- Italian researchers studying two groups of volunteers following a controlled diet found that those who drank two cups of green tea (about 250 mg of catechins) per day for 6 weeks reduced their LDL "bad" cholesterol by an average of 13 mg/dl.¹
- A double blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study involving 240 people with mildly to moderately-elevated cholesterol found that taking 375 mg of theaflavin-enriched green tea extract daily for 12 weeks caused a reduction in total cholesterol of 11.3% and in LDL cholesterol of 16.4%, while the HDL "good" cholesterol increased by 2.3%.²
- Animal studies have shown that even when consuming a diet rich in lard and cholesterol, rats who receive green tea catechins have much lower cholesterol levels than those who don't receive the catechins.³

Green Tea and Cardiovascular Disease

Green tea is associated with a reduction in many risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Besides improving cholesterol values, it may also help lower blood pressure, decrease blood stickiness, and prevent of LDL oxidation (a crucial beginning step in the atherosclerotic process). And while no one has actually proven that green tea can prevent heart disease, some recent findings are exciting:

- A study of nearly 400 people scheduled for coronary angiography found that those who drank at least 1 cup of green tea per day were 42% less likely to have a heart attack than those who didn't drink green tea.⁴
- Green tea may also reduce a person's risk of dying of a heart attack. Researchers interviewed 1900 people four days after having a heart attack. Four years later, those who consumed tea in moderate amounts (about 2 cups per day) decreased their risk of dying by 31%, while those who drank more than 2 cups per day decreased their risk by 39%.⁵
- Green tea seems to be particularly protective against stroke-induced deaths. In a 2006 study, researchers who had been tracking 40,530 Japanese age 40 or older over an 11-year period reported that women who drank five or more cups of green tea daily were 42% less likely to die of a stroke than those who drank less than one cup.⁶

Green Tea and Obesity

Green tea has recently become the latest weapon in the war on weight. But does it really work? The results of some new studies are promising, finding that green tea can increase the rate of calorie burning, reduce body fat levels and even prevent excess weight gain. Although most tests have been performed on laboratory animals, at least one with humans showed that taking in the equivalent of 3 cups of green tea per day burned an additional 80 calories per day.

- In a study of energy expenditure in men, those who took green tea extract containing EGCg plus caffeine three times daily burned about 80 more calories per day than those who didn't take the extract. (Taking caffeine with EGCg didn't have the same effect.) They took in roughly the amount of EGCg found in 3 cups of green tea a day.⁷
- In another study, green tea extract actually helped prevent obesity. Two groups of mice were placed on a high-fat diet that ensured weight gain, and one group also received green tea extract, while the other did not. The mice that got the green tea extract gained 47% less weight than those who didn't get the extract.⁸
- Finally, green tea extract helped to reverse established obesity. Rats that had become obese through deliberate overfeeding had their obesity reversed by supplementation with EGCg, which markedly decreased the amount of adipose tissue.⁹

Green tea is believed to help prevent obesity by revving up the fat-burning effects of brown fat, sending glucose to muscle tissue where it's more likely to be burned, rather than to fat tissue, and inhibiting the action of fat-digesting enzymes so the fat that you eat is less available to the body.

Green Tea and Cancer

Animal studies have clearly shown that green tea can help prevent the growth of tumors in the breast, prostate, lung and skin. And many studies of large populations have linked green tea to a reduction of cancer of the stomach, lung, pancreatic, breast, colon, esophageal, prostate and skin. Green tea's catechins (particularly EGCg) appear to inhibit the cancer process at all stages. Specifically, they protect the body from free radical damage by acting as an antioxidant, lower the toxicity of certain carcinogens, interfere with the binding of carcinogens to the DNA of healthy cells, inhibit cancer activation, slow tumor growth and spread, inhibit the growth of blood vessels to feed the tumor, and encourage cancer cells to "commit suicide" (programmed cell death). Some of the more interesting studies of green tea's effects on cancer include:

Stomach Cancer

Researchers from Shanghai, China compared 206 people newly diagnosed with stomach cancer to 415 healthy control subjects. After studying the volunteers' health, diet and lifestyle habits, the researchers concluded that drinking green tea reduced the risk of developing stomach cancer by as much as 41%.¹⁰

Lung Cancer

The diet and lifestyle habits of 649 nine women with lung cancer were compared to those of 675 healthy women. The researchers found that drinking green tea reduced the risk of developing green tea by as much as 35% (in the nonsmokers only), and that the more green tea consumed, the greater the protection.¹¹

Breast Cancer

A study of 1,100 Asian-American women, half of whom had breast cancer, showed that those in the non-cancer group were much more likely to be green tea drinkers. The researchers concluded that "green tea drinkers showed a significantly reduced risk of breast cancer..." and the more green tea consumed, the greater the protection.¹²

The combined results four studies (a meta-analysis) showed a 12% reduction in risk of developing breast cancer for those drinking the most green tea compared to those drinking the least.¹³

Pancreatic Cancer

A case-control study of cancer of the pancreas involving over 200 people found a significantly decreased risk of developing the disease in those who consumed green tea.¹⁴

Another study found that those who drank 2 or more cups of green tea per day had a 60% lower risk of developing pancreatic cancer.¹⁵ In test-tube studies, green tea has been shown to fight pancreatic cancer by damaging the mitochondria of the cancer cells and inhibiting cancer activation.¹⁶

Prostate Cancer

A double-blind, placebo-controlled study of green tea's ability to fight prostate cancer was published in *Cancer Research* in 2006. Sixty men with HG-PIN, a condition that can quickly progress to prostate cancer, were divided into two groups. One group received 600 mg of green tea catechins per day; the other did not. After one year, only one prostate tumor was found among the green tea group compared to 9 in the control group.¹⁷

Skin Cancer

Much of the research of green tea's effects on skin cancer has been done on hairless mice since their skin is very similar to human skin. And it's been found that green tea extract, whether taken internally or painted on the skin, does help prevent skin cancer at both the induction and promotion phases. Mice given green tea extract in their drinking water for 50 days, then injected with a powerful skin cancer-inducing substance, got 44% fewer skin tumors than rats that hadn't been given the extract.¹⁸ In another study, mice exposed to UVB rays who received green tea catechins through their water supply developed 41% fewer skin tumors than mice treated in the same manner, who didn't get green tea. The tumors that they did develop were smaller.¹⁹ And recent test-tube studies have found that EGCG inhibits the growth and spread of the deadly skin cancer melanoma.²⁰

Green Tea, the Health Elixir

Perhaps the Japanese Buddhist monk Eisai was right when he wrote circa 1211 that "Tea is a miraculous medicine for the maintenance of health." Countless studies have shown that not only can green tea aid in heart health, interfere with the cancer process and help ward off obesity, it can also fight deadly bacteria, including the kind that cause tuberculosis²¹, guard against dental cavities^{22,23}, inhibit the action of viruses²⁴, fight free radical damage to the cells²⁵ and preserve the freshness of foods^{26,27} and cosmetics.

How Much Do You Need?

Most experts agree that a daily intake of 3-10 cups of green tea (the equivalent of 300-1,000 mg of catechins) is ideal for maximum health benefits. In extract form, to get 300 mg of catechins you'd need to take about 480 mg of a 50:1 extract containing 60% catechins (60% of 480 mg = 300 mg).

But even a single cup of green tea per day can be beneficial (just this small amount confers powerful protection against dental cavities and breast cancer). So pour yourself a steaming cup of medicine and enjoy! It could be the beginning of a life-long love affair with a potent and delightful health-enhancer.