

The 55 Best Ways to Boost Your Metabolism

Source: *MSN Health & Fitness*



1. Eat ENOUGH

If you want to weigh less, you've got to eat less, right? Well, if you take in too few calories, it can cause your body to lose muscle mass, which will decrease the rate of your metabolism. Plus, when you skimp on calories, your body slows the rate at which it burns calories to conserve the fuel it's got. "Under-fueling is just as risky as over-fueling," explains Carolyn Brown, MS RD at Foodtrainers in Manhattan. Lisa Moskovitz, RD, CDN agrees: "In an attempt for quick, noticeable weight loss, many people wrongfully believe that eating as few calories as possible is the best solution. Not only can this lead to numerous nutritional deficiencies as the body is getting less food overall, it can actually have the opposite effect on weight loss." Instead of cutting calories like crazy, use the simple diet and exercise hacks below that can help you slim down quickly and safely without screwing up your metabolism.

Metabolism. It's the set of life-sustaining chemical transformations within the cells of living organisms. It's such a big concept that it's understandable to feel as if it's beyond your control. Not true! There are a bunch of quick and easy diet and lifestyle changes you can make to boost

your metabolism, make your body run more efficiently, and reach your weight-loss and fitness goals faster. Just follow this checklist.

2. Have an egg yolk—or two!

Although it's true that egg whites are low in calories, fat free and contain most of the protein found in an egg, eating the entire egg is beneficial to your metabolism. The yolk contains many metabolism-stoking nutrients, including fat-soluble vitamins, essential fatty acids and — most significantly — choline, a powerful compound that attacks the gene mechanism that triggers your body to store fat around your liver. Worried about cholesterol? New studies have found that moderate consumption of two whole eggs per day has no negative effect of a person's lipid (fat) profile and may actually improve it.

3. Kick things up a notch

When it comes to the best workouts for weight loss, neither weights nor cardio can completely move the needle on their own. Interval training is the best way to shed pounds, increase your metabolism, improve your cholesterol profile, and improve insulin sensitivity. At the gym, sign up for a HIIT class, or turn your favorite aerobic exercise, (running, biking, even walking) into an interval workout by adding periods of intense speed (start with 30 to 60 seconds) followed by periods of rest (normal speed) for the same amount of time. Do this six to 10 times to complete a fat-slashing workout. As you get better, slowly increase the amount of time of increased intensity.

4. Use extra virgin olive oil

Our bodies need dietary fat—particularly healthy oils—in order to lose weight and function properly. The right kinds of fats and oils help quash hunger, maximize your metabolism, and speed nutrients through your body. Healthy monounsaturated fats like olive oil can actually help the body to burn calories. Extra virgin olive oil may also increase blood levels of serotonin, a hormone associated with satiety. Plus, olive oil is also loaded with polyphenols, antioxidants that help battle many diseases such as cancer, osteoporosis and brain deterioration.

5. Put on some muscle

Even when you're at rest, your body is constantly burning calories. In fact, 75% of the calories that you burn each day are being used up just keeping you alive. “Resting metabolic rate” is much higher in people with more muscle, because every pound of muscle uses about 6 calories a day just to sustain itself. If you can pack on just five pounds of muscle and sustain it, you'll burn the caloric equivalent of three pounds of fat over the course of a year.

6. Drink green tea

If you always opt for coffee over tea, you could be missing out on a major metabolism boost. In a recent 12-week study, participants who drank 4-5 cups of green tea daily, then did a 25-minute workout, lost an average of two more pounds and more belly fat than the non tea-drinking

exercisers. What's its magic? The brew contains catechins, a type of antioxidant that triggers the release of fat from fat cells and helps speed the liver's capacity for turning fat into energy.

7. Eat carbs at night

The theory makes sense: Your body burns carbs for energy, but if you eat them before you go to sleep, your body just stores them as fat. But the pastanomics of weight loss aren't so simple. One study in the *European Journal of Nutrition* put two groups of men on identical weight loss diets. The only difference? Half of the group ate their carbs throughout the day while the second group reserved carbohydrates for nighttime. The result? The nighttime carb group showed a significantly higher diet-induced thermogenesis (meaning they burned more calories digesting their food the next day). Moreover, the daytime-carb group showed increased blood sugar levels. Another study in the journal *Obesity* saw similar results. Nighttime carb eaters lost 27 percent more body fat—and felt 13.7 percent fuller—than those on the standard diet.

8. Drink full-fat milk

Studies conducted at The Nutrition Institute at the University of Tennessee suggest that consuming calcium — which milk has plenty of — may help your body metabolize fat more efficiently. Other studies have shown that increased calcium intake from dairy products (though not from supplemental calcium carbonate) caused study participants to poop out more fat as opposed to it sticking around on the body. See more of our picks for the 20 best full-fat foods for weight loss.

9. Eat enough protein daily

The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn—no matter what you're doing. Hitting the gym helps you build muscle to begin with, but eating protein keeps it from breaking down and slowing your metabolic rate as a result. Protein needs differ by individual, but typically consuming 0.8 to one gram of protein per kilogram of body weight per day should be sufficient enough to fuel weight loss, says Leah Kaufman, MS, RD, CDN, a New York City-based Dietitian. For a 130-pound (58 kilogram) person, that would equal between 46 and 58 grams of protein. Research has found that because protein is more difficult for the body to break down and digest than other nutrients, it can increase post-meal calorie burn by as much as 35 percent. Aim to incorporate some protein into every meal and snack throughout the day. Stock up on these 29 best-ever proteins for weight loss.

10. Choose whole grains

It takes the body extra effort to break down whole grains than more refined and processed grains, like the flour ordinarily used to make bread and pasta. You can help keep your metabolic rate elevated by consuming foods that the body has to work harder to digest. Your go-tos are whole foods that are also rich in fiber. We're talking brown rice, oatmeal, quinoa, sprouted grain breads and more of the best complex carbs for weight loss.

11. Stand at work three hours a day

Ideally, we sleep about eight hours for every 24. Most people spend another seven to ten hours sitting at their desk. That means most of us spend the overwhelming majority of our time sedentary. Our bodies weren't designed for this level of inactivity — most of humans' evolutionary history involved being active, searching for food and fuel. Nutritionist Lisa Jubilee says that one way to burn more calories daily is to stand more and sit less. She cites a British study which found that standing at work burned 50 more calories per hour than sitting. If that doesn't sound like a lot, consider this: If you stand for just three hours of your day, in one year you'd expend more than 30,000 extra calories — which amounts to about 8 lbs of fat!

12. Eat garlic

Recent studies have shown that garlic supports blood-sugar metabolism and helps control lipid (fat) levels in the blood. Adding garlic to foods that are rich in fats and carbohydrates may keep those substances from doing the damage they're known to do. What's more, eating garlic can help boost your immune system, help ward off heart disease, fight inflammation and lower blood pressure—to name a few.

13. Skip diet soda

Yeah, yeah, it has zero calories, but drinking diet soda may yet play havoc with your goal of having a flat belly. Research published in the journal *Trends in Endocrinology & Metabolism* shows that artificially sweetened beverages may screw up the body's normal metabolic response to sugar, actually increasing appetite! Increasingly, diet drinks are being linked with weight gain, metabolic syndrome and a host of other ills. (Check out what happens to your body when you give up soda.) Best to give them a wide berth. But if you really crave something sweet...

14. Nibble on chocolate

In a study by Swiss and German researchers, lucky participants ate about 1.5 ounces of dark chocolate daily for two weeks. Ultimately, these chocolate nibblers had lower stress-hormone levels and a more regulated metabolism than a control group. Scientists speculate that chemicals in cocoa, such as flavonoids, play a role in regulating metabolism by alleviating stress that can cause your fat-burning engines to go on the fritz. Should you think this is a license to go wild, take heed: We're talking small amounts of high-quality dark chocolate. Researchers say 1.5 ounces is enough.

15. Drink oolong tea

This antioxidant-rich traditional Chinese tea not only helps keep cholesterol levels in check and aids digestion, it can also help rev up your metabolism. Like green tea, oolong is packed with catechins, which boost weight loss efforts by improving the body's ability to metabolize fat. A study in the Chinese Journal of Integrative Medicine found that participants who regularly sipped oolong tea lost six pounds over the course of the six-week time period. That's a pound a week! Oolong tea is just one of the 22 best teas for weight loss.

16. Eat lentils daily

Iron deficiency affects more than 1 in 5 women in the US. Being deficient in essential minerals can show up in all kinds of ways but an iron deficiency can also be a blow for getting into your skinny jeans with relative ease. See, your body can't work as efficiently to burn calories when it doesn't have what it needs to work properly. A cup of lentils, it turns out, provides over a third of your daily iron needs. Legumes like lentils also have been shown to drive down bad cholesterol and blood pressure. That's why they're one of the 7 best foods to eat for rapid weight loss.

17. Eat full-fat foods

A new report from the Credit Suisse Research Institute found that more and more of us are choosing whole-fat foods over skim, lite, fat-free or other modern monikers of leanness. And while many health organizations like the American Heart Association still want us to cut down on fat—particularly saturated fat—this full-fat trend may be a healthy rebellion against those decades-old credos, according to recent studies. In fact, people who eat a lot of high-fat dairy products actually have the lowest incidence of diabetes, according to a 2015 study of 26,930 people in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Those who ate a lot of low-fat dairy products, on the other hand, had the highest incidence. The researchers speculated that while calcium, protein, vitamin D and other nutrients in yogurt are indeed good for us, we need the fat that goes along with them in order to get their protective effects. These are some of the 20 best full-fat foods for weight loss.

18. Sometimes, feel like a nut

A 2003 study demonstrated that a low calorie diet that is rich in almonds could help increase weight loss. Not only do the good monounsaturated fats in almonds have an effect on insulin levels, say scientists, but also give dieters a full feeling, meaning that they are less likely to overeat. So stock your pantry with almonds, walnuts and these other best nuts for weight loss, as well as nut butters.

19. Eat whole foods

The smoothie revolution is here, and lots of people are swilling down bushels of leafy greens. Believe it or not, there's a downside to this ingenious delivery method. A big part of the body's job — breaking down food so that the body can absorb nutrients — has been outsourced to our Nutribullets and Vitamixes. That means that the body is expending much less energy than it would if we were eating kale, spinach and bananas in their solid form. Smoothies are great for weight loss, but by prioritizing lean meats, fish, fibrous vegetables and fruit, you are driving up TEF (Thermic Effect of Food) and expending more calories on digestion.

20. Eat salmon

There are plenty of fish in the sea, but salmon may be the best one for your metabolism. That's because most cases of underactive thyroid are due to inflammation of the gland, and salmon boasts significant anti-inflammatory properties thanks to its rich omega-3 fatty acid content. In fact, one study that looked at the effects of weight loss and seafood consumption showed salmon to be the most effective at reducing inflammation — better than cod, fish oil and a no-fish diet.

The fishy fatty acids may also signal thyroid cells in the liver to burn more fat, a recent study published in *The Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry* suggests.

21. Drink kola nut tea

Clocking in at caffeine counts higher than a cup of coffee, kola nut teas are sure to zap any morning drowsiness—and set your metabolism up for a hotter burn. In a study published in the journal *Physiology & Behavior*, a 3-4 percent increase in metabolic rate was measured in both lean and obese subjects after a single 100 mg dose of caffeine. Look for teas made from this caffeine-containing fruit; if you want to skip the label-reading, just grab a box of Celestial Seasoning's Fast Lane, which clocks in 20 mg above your daily cup of coffee at 110 mg caffeine. Kola nut tea is just one of the 22 best teas for weight loss.

22. Grab an apple

Eating an apple each day can help prevent metabolic syndrome, a disorder associated with abdominal fat, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. They'll keep the doctor away and your muffin tops at bay because apples are a low-calorie, nutrient dense source of fiber, which studies have proven to be integral to reducing visceral fat. A recent study at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center found that for every 10-gram increase in soluble fiber eaten per day, visceral fat was reduced by 3.7 percent over five years! That's just one reason why apples are one of the best fruits for fat loss!

23. Start your day with lean protein

Contrary to popular belief, researchers now say breakfast doesn't kickstart the metabolism and may not be the most important meal of the day. A new study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* had more than 300 overweight participants consume diets that included either eating or skipping breakfast. At the end of 16 weeks, dieters who ate breakfast lost no more weight than the breakfast skippers. And a second study in the same journal found eating breakfast had zero impact on resting metabolism. Breakfast is an ideal place to squeeze protein, fiber and other nutrients into your day, but if the choice is a doughnut or nothing, opt for the nothing. Start your day with lean protein, which burns twice as many calories during digestion as fat or carbs. But don't stress about squeezing it in before 9 am.

24. Eat three square meals, not more

Bodybuilders have long sworn by eating every few hours to keep their muscles fueled, but don't discount the weight loss potential of three squares a day. A study in the journal *Hepatology* put two groups of men on weight-gain diets. One group divided the calories among three small meals with snacks in between while the second group ate the same number of calories in three square meals. While both groups gained weight, researchers found that belly fat—the dangerous kind that increases heart-disease risk—only increased in the high-meal frequency group.

25. REDUCE booze to boost fat burn 73%!

While drinking in moderation every so often won't do too much harm to your waistline, making it a habit can slow down your metabolic rate. Why? When your body has a cocktail to break down, it takes precedence over any food that you've already eaten that's waiting to be digested. This slows down the entire metabolic process. In fact, some researchers claim boozing can decrease the body's fat-burning ability by up to 73 percent! On the occasions that you decided to indulge, stick to low-calorie drinks. Alternate your alcohol with water to slow your pace, and cut yourself off after two drinks. Avoid ordering high-cal bar food like fries and burgers. An important note: Wine in moderation can have numerous benefits, including weight loss! Seek out these 16 wines for weight loss.

26. Snack on yogurt

Probiotics in products like yogurt and fermented foods like pickles and sauerkraut help good bacteria in the gut process food more efficiently. Not only is yogurt a great source of protein and calcium, studies have shown that eating it as part of a reduced-calorie diet can increase metabolism. And you can incorporate it into dishes throughout the day. Here are 20 delicious yogurt-based recipes for weight loss.

27. Eat oysters

Shuck one for your metabolism. Heck, make it a half dozen. After all, oysters are one of the best dietary sources zinc—a mineral that's critical, and complementary, to a healthy thyroid. In fact, the body needs enough zinc to activate production of thyroid hormone. And, in turn, we need enough thyroid hormone to absorb zinc. Any way you look at it, deficiencies are likely to result in a sluggish metabolism, and supplementing with the mineral has shown to get weight loss back on track. One study found that obese people who consumed 30 mg of zinc per day—the equivalent of just six raw oysters — had improved body mass indices, lost weight and showed improvements in blood cholesterol levels. Get shucking!

28. Dim the lights

Want to have a faster metabolism? Install apps like f.lux or twilight on your devices. They reduce certain parts of the light spectrum as your bedtime approaches. Studies have shown that LED lights in phones disturb production of sleep hormone melatonin. A purring metabolism is greatly helped by a good night's sleep. So take your late night sexting down a notch or two...at least in terms of screen brightness.

29. Eat avocado

It's like butter that grows on trees. But instead of cholesterol, trans and saturated fats in butter, avocado contains metabolism-enhancing monounsaturated fat. But that's not all. Each one is also packed with fiber and free-radical-killing antioxidants. Free radicals are destructive rogue oxygen molecules—natural byproducts of metabolism—that trigger various chain reactions in the body that destroy cells and DNA, causing all kinds of health problems. Antioxidants in fresh fruits and vegetables can help neutralize some free radicals, but they can't reach the mitochondria—base camp for the free radical army. And that's a problem; when your

mitochondria aren't working properly, your metabolism runs less efficiently. Enter: Avocado. New research conducted in Mexico found that monounsaturated-rich oil pressed from the fruit can help mitochondria survive attack. Researchers say the results jive with low-disease rates in Mediterranean countries where olive oil—nutritionally similar to the avocado—is a diet staple.

30. Eat cheese

You might want to think twice before ditching dairy if you're trying to lose weight, despite what your Paleo-preaching CrossFit friends tell you. Cheese is a satisfying, portable and inexpensive food that's packed with calcium, vitamin D and protein. "Calcium can also promote weight loss because it helps maintain muscle mass, which boosts and helps maintain metabolism, helping you burn calories more efficiently throughout the day," says Tanya Zuckerbrot, RD, author of *The Miracle Carb Diet: Make Calories & Fat Disappear—with Fiber!* That doesn't mean you can help yourself to a cheese-drenched casserole, though. Work cheese into fiber-rich snacks to make them more satiating.

31. Eat beans

Not only are they a great source of non-animal derived protein, they're also packed with both soluble and insoluble fiber. The process of digesting the fiber and proteins in beans burns extra calories, and both types of fiber help lower insulin levels after digestion and cause your body to store less fat. Those are just a few of the reasons that beans are one of the 8 superfoods you should eat every day.

32. Eat organic beef, eggs and dairy

"Hormones dictate how our body utilizes the energy we give it," says nutritionist Lisa Jubilee. "Between our reproductive, thyroid and growth hormones, appetite, insulin and hunger hormones — leptin and ghrelin — our bodies have to perform a tricky balancing act to keep us lean, energized and viable reproductive beings." Those tasks have become much more difficult because of the hormone residues we consume via cage-raised foods. If you want to give your metabolism a leg up, Jubilee says, switch to organic, grass-fed, pasture-raised beef, eggs and dairy products, thereby avoiding those nasty hormones at mealtime.

33. Eat broccoli

Calcium and vitamin C team up well to boost metabolism. Broccoli contains both nutrients, not to mention the kind of fiber that's been shown to increase TEF (the Thermic Effect of Food, or your metabolic rate after eating). What's more: Broccoli contains a compound that works on a genetic level to effectively "switch off" cancer genes, leading to the targeted death of cancer cells and slowing of disease progression. One study found men who ate three or more half-cup servings of broccoli per week had a 41 percent decreased risk for prostate cancer compared to men who ate fewer than one serving per week!

34. Laugh more

It's no joke: genuine laughter may cause a 10–20 percent increase in basal energy expenditure and resting heart-rate, according to a study published in the *International Journal of Obesity*. That means a 10-15 minute giggle fest could burn up 40 to 170 calories. Let us hear you lol!

35. Lower your bedroom temperature

A striking new study published in the journal *Diabetes* suggests that simply turning on the AC may subtly transform a person's stores of brown fat—"good" fat, stimulated by cold temperatures, that serves to keep us warm by burning through "bad" fat stores. Participants spent a few weeks sleeping in bedrooms with varying temperatures: a neutral 75 degrees, a cool 66 degrees, and a balmy 81 degrees. After four weeks of sleeping at 66 degrees, the men had almost doubled their volumes of brown fat. Cool! (In fact, your bedroom is an often-overlooked weight loss booster. We found 20 surprising ways to lose weight while you sleep.)

36. Eat peppers

It's well reported that fiery capsaicin (think: hot sauce, cayenne, chilies) can rev up the metabolism, but study findings presented at the Experimental Biology meeting in Anaheim, California, showed similar weight loss potential in dihydrocapsiate (DCT), the non-spicy cousin of hot peppers. Participants who ate the most DCT experienced a metabolic boost that was nearly double the placebo group! Bottom line: pile on the poblanos!

37. Drink more water

Weight loss doesn't get easier than this: Simply drinking more water may increase the rate at which healthy people burn calories, according to a study in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*. After drinking approximately 17 ounces of water (about 2 tall glasses), participants' metabolic rates increased by 30 percent. The researchers estimate that increasing water intake by 1.5 liters a day (about 6 cups) would burn an extra 17,400 calories over the course of the year—a weight loss of approximately five pounds!

38. Brew a cup of coffee ...

In addition to green tea, coffee is one of the best drinks for weight loss because it boosts your metabolism. The average metabolic rate of people who drank caffeinated coffee was 16 percent higher than that of those who drank decaf, according to a study published in the journal *Physiology & Behavior*. A cup of black coffee is a good choice for a pre-workout beverage, too: Researchers found that cyclists who took a caffeine supplement were able to ride about a mile farther than those who took a placebo. Make yours a venti and skip the sweeteners.

39. ... But not 10

Have a few cups of java for a metabolism boost, but if you're never seen without a mug at your lips, that could work against you, says nutritionist Amy Shapiro. Caffeine is a natural appetite suppressant. If you're constantly consuming it, you may not eat much — or realize how hungry you really are — until you get home for dinner. "Not eating enough throughout the day can make

your metabolism sluggish,” she says. “By the time you eat dinner, instead of immediately using that food for energy, your body is aggressively storing it as fat, just in case it will be deprived again.”

40. Add mustard

Add mustard to your meal, and feel the burn—literally! Scientists at England’s Oxford Polytechnic Institute found that by eating 1 tsp of mustard (about 5 calories) can boost the metabolism by up to 25 percent for several hours after eating. The benefits, researchers say, may be attributed to capsaicin and allyl isothiocyanates, phytochemicals that give the mustard its characteristic flavor.

41. Move for 2.5 minutes

Forget slogging on the treadmill for hours, research printed in the journal *Physiological Reports* showed that people who did five 30-second bursts of max-effort cycling, followed by 4 minutes of rest, burned 200 extra calories that day. That’s just 2.5 minutes of work for a resting metabolism boost that will last 24-48 hours!

42. Eat lean meat

Deficiencies in the mineral iron can slow metabolism. Know what’s got plenty of it? Lean meat. Eating three to four daily servings of iron-rich foods will help keep your inner furnace burning. Fortified cereals, dried fruit and dark leafy greens will get you some of the way to meeting your iron goals, but lean meat — with its muscle-building protein content — will be doubly useful in revving up your metabolism.

43. Give up sugary drinks

Caffeine may provide a bit of a boost to the metabolism, especially when ingested before exercise, but no amount of metabolic boost can burn off the empty calories that energy drinks supply. According to one study published in *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, a typical energy drink serves up a quarter cup of sugar—calories that hit your body all at once and trigger fat storage. If you want to burn calories, try the brand-new miracle beverage known as...tap water. According to a study published in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, after drinking two tall glasses of water (17 ounces), participants’ metabolic rates increased by 30 percent.

44. Add vinegar to your meals

Great on salad — and now shown to “switch on” genes that release proteins which break down fat. In a study of 175 overweight Japanese men and women, researchers found that participants who drank 1 or 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar daily for 12 weeks significantly lowered their body weight, BMI, visceral fat and waist circumference.

45. Plan a weekly cheat meal

Experts agree that having a weekly cheat meal can actually help you reach your weight loss goals. Having a strategy is key. "By planning your cheat meal, you know what you'll be eating and can cut a few extra calories earlier in the day," says Jim White, RD, ACSM Health Fitness Specialist and owner of Jim White Fitness & Nutrition Studios. This also allows you to really pick a favorite food instead of wasting calories on something you didn't enjoy." Amy Shapiro, MS, RD, CDN, Real Nutrition NYC, gives similar advice. "Pick your poison. If you're going out, pick your splurge. Are you going to dig into carbs — like a bread basket or pasta — or dessert? Or are you planning on tossing back a few cocktails?" She urges cheaters to avoid consuming all three of those common categories at once sitting. "Focus only on one," she says, adding that by saving the others for another time you can "enjoy without going overboard."

46. Drink goji tea

Dried goji berries might be a staple of every health food store, but it's worth looking for them a couple aisles over in the tea section. *Lycium barbarum*, the plant from which gojis are harvested, is a traditional Asian medicinal therapy for diabetes and other diseases, but it also boasts a slimming effect. In a study published in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, participants were either given a single dose of *L. barbarum* or a placebo after a meal. The researchers found that one hour after the dose, the goji group was burning calories at a rate 10 percent higher than the placebo group. The effects lasted up to 4 hours. Bonus: Most goji teas are mixed with green tea, further boosting your calorie burn. Goji tea is just one of the 22 best teas for weight loss.

47. Quit stressing

Stress can actually cause the body to metabolize food more slowly, according to research published in the journal *Biological Psychiatry*. To make matters worse, the food we crave when we're stressed out tends to be fatty and full of sugar. Researchers say that the combination of high-cal cravings and a stress-induced, snail-paced metabolic rate can result in significant weight gain. To keep your metabolism running strong, fight stress with laughter. Research shows that smiling and laughing causes levels of stress hormones to diminish.

48. Stop napping

Research has found that people burn fewer calories when they sleep during the day and log their waking hours after the sun's gone down. To come to this finding, University of Colorado at Boulder researchers studied 14 healthy adults for six days. For two days, study participants slept at night and stayed awake during the day, then they reversed their routines to mimic the schedules of night owls. When participants slept during the day, researchers found that they burned 52 to 59 fewer calories than they did while catching their zzz's in the evening—likely because the schedule messed with their circadian rhythm, the body's internal clock that plays a major role in metabolism function. If you have no choice but to sleep during the day, aim to cut 50-60 calories from your daily diet.

49. Drink yerba maté

This tea is known for its powerful thermogenic effects—meaning it turns up your body’s calorie-burning mechanism—and can also promote weight loss by improving insulin sensitivity. In a recent study, participants were divided into two groups. One group took a placebo 60 minutes prior to exercising, while the other group ingested 1000 mg capsule of yerba maté. Researchers found that those who consumed the herb increased the beneficial effects their workout had on their metabolism. Yerba maté is just one of the 22 best teas for weight loss.

50. Order chili

Think of every bean as a little weight-loss pill. One study found that people who ate $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of beans daily weighed 6.6 pounds less than those who didn’t even though the bean eaters consumed, on average, 199 calories more per day. The magic is in the perfect combination of protein and fiber: studies show that those who eat the most fiber gain the least weight over time, and that eating fiber can rev your fat burn by as much as 30 percent. Aim for about 25 g a day—the amount in about three servings each of fruits and vegetables.

51. Take a Vitamin D supplement

If there’s one supplement most Americans should be taking, it’s vitamin D. It’s essential for preserving metabolism-revving muscle tissue, but researchers estimate that a measly 20 percent of Americans take in enough through their diet. While you can nail 90 percent of your recommended daily value (400 IU) in a 3.5-ounce serving of salmon, a daily supplement makes a lot of sense. Other good dietary sources: tuna, fortified milk and cereal, and eggs.

52. Drink water when you wake up

For nutritionist Lisa Jubilee, one of the best and cheapest ways to give your metabolism a jolt is to drink water (she suggests 20 to 32 ounces) shortly after waking. Why? During sleep, your body’s metabolic function slowed, and unless you woke up in the middle of the night to swig some water, it didn’t receive any fluids. Jubilee suggests completely rehydrating before stressing your body with any other food or drink. “My clients who have implemented this report less bloating, more energy and a smaller appetite,” she says. Her motto for getting your inner furnace stoked and ready for the day: “Rehydrate, then caffeinate!”

53. Pack snacks

“Always be prepared for a busy or unpredictable day by keeping healthy snacks on you, at your desk, in your car,” says nutritionist Amy Shapiro. She suggests having almonds or other unsalted nuts, apples, bananas, chia bars, protein bars, or other fruit and nut bars close at hand. Shapiro says that if you have to skip breakfast, lunch, or even dinner during your quest to look your best, you can keep your energy levels up while making healthy choices. “You’ll have no reason to run to the vending machine for chips or stick your hand in the candy bowl,” she says. For the healthiest ideas on the planet, check out our list of the 50 best snack ideas for weight loss.

54. Drink matcha

Derived from the Japanese tencha leaf and then stone ground into a bright-green fine powder, matcha literally means “powdered tea,” and it’s incredibly good for you. Research shows the concentration of epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) in matcha to be 137 times greater than the amount you’ll find in most store-bought green tea. EGCG is a dieter’s best friend: studies have shown the compound can simultaneously boost the breakdown of fat and block the formation of belly-fat cells. One study found men who drank green tea containing 136 mg EGCG—what you’ll find in a single 4 gram serving of matcha—lost twice as much weight than a placebo group and four times as much visceral (belly) fat over the course of 3 months. Need one more reason for tea-time? A single serving sneaks in 4 grams of protein—that’s more than an egg white! Matcha is just one of the 22 best teas for weight loss.

55. Go to bed earlier

Stephen Colbert’s doing great, but now it’s time to DVR him and start getting to bed earlier. A study in Finland looked at sets of identical twins and discovered that in each set of siblings, the twin who slept less had more visceral fat. If you do nothing else differently, just getting an extra half hour of shuteye will make all the difference. If you're chronically sleep deprived, don’t be surprised if you gain a few pounds without eating a morsel of extra food. “A lack of sleep can cause several metabolic problems,” says nutritionist Seth Santoro. “It can cause you to burn fewer calories, lack appetite control and experience an increase in cortisol levels, which stores fat.” Lack of sufficient sleep — which experts say is 7 to 9 hours a night for most people — also leads to impaired glucose tolerance, a.k.a. your body's ability to utilize sugar for fuel. “We all have those less-than-adequate nights of sleep,” says nutritionist Lisa Jubilee. “But if it's a regular thing, you're better off lengthening your night's sleep than working out, if fat loss or weight maintenance is your goal.”