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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Understanding Your Metabolism

By Kathy Browning

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The one thing people most often say to me is, "my metabolism has slowed down", but very few individuals truly understand what metabolism is or how to improve it.

Metabolism is the term used for all of the physical and chemical reactions in the body. The chemical reactions of metabolism take the food we eat and transform it into fuels and building blocks for the body. These chemical reactions are necessary for providing energy for activities such as movement and thinking, and for organ function such as digestion, and the formation of urine. These reactions are also critical for breaking down old tissue and building new tissue.

The foods that we consume are chemically complex. They must be broken down by the body into simpler chemical forms called nutrients. Nutrients are taken in through the intestinal walls and transported by the blood to the cells. The processes involved are called digestion, absorption, and metabolism.

Digestion begins the process through a series of physical and chemical changes by breaking down the food in preparation for absorption from the intestinal tract into the bloodstream. Digestion actually begins when chewing breaks large pieces of food into smaller pieces.

The next step in this process is absorption. Absorption takes place primarily in the small intestine, where its surface area is comparable to a quarter of a football field and its length is 20 feet. That's pretty amazing, isn't it?

Nutrients are taken up by the intestines and passed into the bloodstream to facilitate cell metabolism. Within 3 to 4 hours after a meal has been eaten, the body must find a way to absorb millions of nutrient molecules including amino acids (proteins), monosaccharides, monoglycerides, glycerol (carbohydrates), fatty acids and glycerol (fats), vitamins, and minerals.

A whole lot of stuff goes on here, with villi (several hundred cells covered with microscopic hairs) in constant motion, trapping nutrient molecules and digesting and absorbing them into the cells.

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By the time we get to metabolism, the handling of food within the body has reached its final stage. The process of metabolism involves all the chemical changes that nutrients undergo from the time they are absorbed until they become part of the body or are excreted from the body. Metabolism is the conversion of the digested nutrients into components for energy or for building material for living tissue.

Metabolism happens in two general phases that occur simultaneously, anabolism and catabolism. Anabolism (uses energy) involves all the chemical reactions that the nutrients undergo in the construction or building up of body chemicals and tissues such as blood, enzymes, and hormones.

Catabolism (releases energy) involves the reactions in which various compounds are used to do the body's work, to produce heat, or to be stored for later use.

Energy from carbohydrates, fats, and protein for the body's cells, comes from their conversion to glucose, which combines with oxygen in a series of chemical reactions that form carbon dioxide, water and cellular energy. The energy is used for body functions, and the carbon dioxide and water are waste products that are carried out of the body by the bloodstream.

The process of metabolism requires that extensive systems of enzymes be maintained to facilitate the thousands of different chemical reactions that must be performed, and also to regulate the rate at which these reactions proceed. The presence of protein, vitamins, and minerals is essential for these enzymes to perform their functions at their very best.

One of the biggest problems I see with individuals is the lack of time they take to consume their food – their very essence of life. Not only are they eating junk food, or foods with little nutritional value, they are also consuming them rapid fire. Eating while agitated, fatigued, or all stressed out may give rise to gastrointestinal disturbances.

If a person is under stress, digestive secretions are reduced and the blood is routed to the muscles more than to the digestive tract. This action impairs efficient absorption of nutrients. To digest and absorb food best, one should be relaxed and tranquil at mealtimes. Hurried meals under tense conditions are not beneficial to normal digestion.

The information presented here is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to treat or diagnose any medical condition. It is imperative that you take your health into your own hands and empower yourself by researching all of your options. With the vast amount of information available on-line, you can arm yourself with an arsenal of information that will assist you and your healthcare practitioner in creating the best plan of treatment for your needs. Here are a few resources to get you started:

<http://www.ivillage.com/diet/metabolism> – 61 Ways to Boost Your Calorie Burn

<http://www.metabolism.com/> – Here you will find information on Weight Loss/Weight Gain, Nutrition Programs, Ask the Expert and much more. Very informative site.

<http://www.primusweb.com/fitnesspartner/library/weight/0698metabolism.htm> – Great article on dieting

and metabolism

About the author - Kathy Browning is a healing arts practitioner and wellness coach. She is also the Editor-In-Chief of "The Art of Living Well", an ezine focused on the mind, body, spirit connection and the author of "Feng Shui for Abundant Living". Be sure to visit <http://www.cancercomfort.com> for more information.

Speed up Metabolism

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Metabolism is essentially the speed at which our body's motor is running. The speed at which our body burns calories is called the metabolic rate. It's how fast your "motor" is running when you're still in a reclined position or sleeping. About 60–75% of energy is expended by the body at rest in such activities.

The metabolism is based on the number of calories we burn throughout the day. Our body constantly burns calories to keep us going whether we are eating, sleeping, cleaning etc. People with a lower percentage of body fat (i.e. muscular) have a higher metabolism than others that are less muscular because muscle uses more calories to maintain itself than fat. Some people have a slower metabolic rate and have a harder time staying slim. Younger persons have higher (faster) metabolism because of the increased activity of cells. A slow metabolism actually causes to store fat. The slower the metabolic rate, the greater the weight gains. How to build muscles to improve metabolism? What type of exercise is ideal that speed up metabolism so that you burn calories even at rest or sleep? There are simple exercises that speed up the metabolism.

Causes for Low Metabolism

Fasting

A low calorie diet

Snacking throughout the day on high sugared foods (candy, colas, cakes, gum).

Eating or drinking too much sugar containing foods.

Lack of physical activity.

Underactive thyroid.

Metabolism Boosters

There are some natural metabolism boosters (natural foods) that improves your metabolism. Do not take over the counter pills containing animal thyroid extract that claim to boost up metabolism. These products may have side effects as diarrhea, increased heart rate, excessive sweating, nervousness, tremors, bulging eyes, etc.

How to Improve (Speed up) Metabolism

Do not skip any meals

Exercise daily

Build your muscles

Avoid alcohol, sugar, and fastings

Drink 8–10 glasses of water daily.

Eat foods with high nutrition values

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. Download the

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eBook Web site for details on metabolsim, metabolism boosters and how to increase your metabolism.

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