

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

6 Tips to Boost Metabolism |

8 Ways to Burn Calories Without Noticing |

Children's Dental Health Month 2

How to Boost Your Self Esteem 2

Did you know there are foods that burn more calories than they contain? They are called negative calorie foods and they actually burn more calories in their digestion than they offer, so you can fulfill your snack craving without the guilt of a bag of potato chips. They include:

- Celery
- Oranges
- Strawberries
- Tangerines
- Grapefruit
- Carrots
- Apricots
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Cucumbers
- Watermelon
- Cauliflower
- Apples
- Hot Chili Peppers
- Zucchini



Just keep in mind that a diet limited to only these foods could lead to malnutrition so make sure to maintain a balanced diet. But when snack time hits, these healthy, negative calorie foods are winners

The Wellness Connection

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6 Tips to Boost Mood and Metabolism

By making a few simple adjustments to your diet, you can elevate your mood and boost your metabolism. The benefits are huge: Maintaining a good mood will help you stick to a healthy diet, be more productive, and increase your self-esteem. Metabolism is the process your body uses to break down food. Ensuring your metabolism is working most effectively will help you feel your best and energized to get the most out of life.

Resist Skipping Meals.

Skipping or missing a meal can cause a dip in your blood sugar, leading to crankiness and lethargy. Maintain your blood sugar levels, and your energy, by eating small amounts of food throughout the day. You might even prefer eating six smaller meals rather than three large ones.



Stay Hydrated

Dehydration can also make you feel sluggish and lethargic. Be sure to drink throughout the day, and don't rely on thirst alone to remind you to have another glass of water. The average person needs about eight glasses of water, and

that may be hard to drink without reminders.

Think Moderation, Especially for Low-Nutrient Foods

Avoid a lot of caffeine, refined carbohydrates (sugar), alcohol, salt, and other food additives. Any of these, especially in large amounts, can decrease your metabolic efficiency. Eating large quantities of carbohydrates tend to cause an energy rush and then a big crash; this can lead to crankiness and fatigue. Excess salt can disrupt your fluid balance, changing your daily water needs, not to mention increasing health risks like high blood pressure.

Strive for Balance in the Food You Eat

Properly combine protein, carbohydrates, and fat to achieve a balanced energy intake. In general, a healthy diet includes a mix of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and some protein, but each person has individual needs based on age, sex, physical activity level, body size, and stress factors. To find out the best foods for you, consult a nutritionist who can help you determine the right balance.

Get a Boost From Good Mood Food

While research about the mood- and metabolism-boosting qualities of certain foods is mixed, foods high in the amino acid tryptophan can increase serotonin levels in the brain, contributing to feelings of optimism and calm. Add some bananas, avocados, dried apricots, walnuts, sunflower seeds, or pumpkin seeds for some extra tryptophan. Polyunsaturated omega-3 fats help elevate mood and reduce anxiety and depression. Look for omega-3-rich fish, like salmon and mackerel to fill this need.



Keep a Food Diary

Some foods can have the opposite effect of tryptophan and instead trigger negative changes in mood and cause irritability or headaches. If you think a particular food might be affecting your mood, start a food diary. Record all the foods you eat each day and how you feel before and after every meal. After two weeks, review your entries to see if any foods line up with specific moods, either good or bad.

8 Ways to Burn Calories Without Noticing



* Take the escalator -- but climb the stairs while you ride. You'll get there faster and use your muscles while you're at it. Just 5 minutes of stair climbing burns 144 calories.

*Instead of piling items on the stairs so you can take them up-stairs at once, take them one at a time.

When cooling your heels while waiting in a doctor's office, drugstore, or airport, stay on your

feet -- standing burns 36 more calories per hour than sitting.

*Scrub your floors more often. Putting some elbow grease into cleaning floors is more intense than vacuuming -- and it makes your floors look better to boot.

*Wash your car by hand instead of taking it through the automatic carwash. You'll burn an extra 280 calories in an hour.



*Chew sugarless gum. Research has found that the action of jaw muscles alone burns about 11 calories an hour.

*Play with kids: Impromptu games of basketball, touch football, or tag -- or just jumping rope or throwing a ball -- will help you use energy and set a good example of active play for the children. Calories burned: 80 to 137 every 10 minutes



Eating unhealthy foods is one of the primary reasons for the rise in numbers of affected children and cavities. Healthy snacks such as fruits and nuts are often replaced with processed foods, and soda and sugary drinks have trumped water. And unfortunately, even if your child is drinking water, it won't do their teeth any good if it's bottled; because unlike tap water, bottled water doesn't contain fluoride, which is essential for the healthy development of your child's teeth. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be this way. Visiting the dentist regularly, practicing good oral hygiene and promoting healthy eating habits are all ways to help break the connection between children and cavities.



Do you know that in addition to following a healthy diet, regular exercise will keep your body working most effectively and will augment both your mood and metabolism. The key message here is balance. A variety of healthy foods with a dose of exercise will help you maintain your energy, speed up your metabolism, and boost your mood.



Another way to boost yourself esteem is to do a good deed. You will find that things like volunteering at a homeless shelter or even a simple thing like helping somebody who is lost by giving proper directions will make you feel good for the rest of the day. You will be doing something worthwhile and when you see how badly off some people are, you will start to appreciate your life more and be grateful for what you have.



Children's Dental Health Month



Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Tooth decay (dental caries) affects children in the United States more than any other chronic infectious disease. Untreated tooth decay causes pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing, and learning. The good news is that tooth decay and other oral diseases

that can affect children are preventable. The combination of dental sealants and fluoride has the potential to nearly eliminate tooth decay in school-age children

Here are some things you can do to ensure good oral health for your child:

Encourage your children to eat regular nutritious meals and avoid frequent between-meal snacking.

Protect your child's teeth with fluoride.

Use a fluoride toothpaste. If

your child is less than 7 years old, put only a pea-sized amount on their toothbrush. If your drinking water is not fluoridated, talk to a dentist or physician about the best way to protect your child's teeth.

Talk to your child's dentist about dental sealants. They protect teeth from decay.

If you are pregnant, get prenatal care and eat a healthy diet. The diet should include folic acid to prevent birth defects of the brain and spinal cord and possibly cleft lip/palate

How to Boost Your Self-Esteem

Almost everyone experiences a bout of low self-esteem at some point in life. But for some, especially those suffering with depression, chronic low self-esteem can be a debilitating symptom that spirals out of control, keeping you from enjoying life and accomplishing the things you want to do.

A person can create his own low self-esteem cycle, or events that occur can bring it on. The former happens when you judge yourself harshly, telling yourself that you are worthless. As for the latter, dealing with a stressful situation such as a disability or a loss of a job can make it hard to feel good about yourself. How others treat you, as well as how you get along with others, can also affect your self-esteem. It may not always be possible to control your inner thoughts. And you often have no control over the events that unfold in your life. But if you suffer from low self-esteem, there are things you can do to boost your self-image.

Often, traditional treatments for depression, such as medication and psychotherapy, can help. Getting into a therapy or

support group is the first thing people who are depressed should do to boost their self-esteem. Besides following your doctor's recommendations, here are other steps to consider that may improve low self-esteem:

Get some exercise. Exercise is recommended for people who are dealing with low self-esteem as a symptom of depression. Making exercise a part of your regular routine can help you feel better emotionally and physically.



Eat a healthful diet. Avoiding foods high in sugar, fat, or salt, and eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy products is an important part of taking good care of yourself — the healthier you feel, the better you will feel about yourself.

Make the time to participate in activities you enjoy. Carve out time each day to do something you really like, such as listening to music, playing a musical instrument, or working on a craft project. Enjoyable



activities can make you feel better, thereby improving your low self-esteem.

Be productive. Completing everyday tasks like cleaning your kitchen, organizing your junk drawer, getting your laundry done, or paying your bills on time will give you a sense of accomplishment. Stay connected socially. Even though it can sometimes be difficult just to get out of bed when you are depressed, it can help to spend time with people who are good to you and who can make you feel good about yourself.



Practice good self-care. Shower regularly, brush your teeth, dress in nice clothes, keep your hair trimmed, and do other things that make you more confident about your physical appearance. Feeling better about how you look on the outside will leave you feeling better inside.

Depression can make it hard to find the energy and motivation to take care of yourself. But taking time to focus on you can improve your self-esteem and make you feel better all around.