

[IMAGE]

## **Revving Up Our Metabolism This Winter**

By Julie T. Chen, MD

With all the "dashing through the snow" this winter season, why is it that we are all still concerned about gaining weight? With all of the sweets around every corner of our work environment, it's no wonder that we are all concerned about at least maintaining our weight and not gaining weight. So, how can we best keep our metabolism revved up this winter season to win the battle of the bulge?

Of the utmost importance is that we make sure that we keep our body moving as much as it can on any given day or time. The more we move, the more we burn and the more efficient our metabolism is. Some easy ways to incorporate activity into our day include, but are not limited to:

- Taking the stairs
- Walking to your neighbor's house or work colleagues cubicle instead of calling on the phone
- Parking farther or even walk to the store
- Sitting on a stability ball at your desk to work your core
- Doing exercises during commercial breaks on TV
- Making family time an active time with dancing to music or going for a walk
- Making time to go to the gym before or after work several times a week

When you build more muscle tone and then use those muscles in daily activities and exercise, your metabolism benefits from that and you prevent it from getting sluggish.

Another factor in keeping our metabolism humming smoothly this winter season is to make sure you are eating enough so that your body doesn't think it's in starvation mode, but not so much that it can't burn off the excess calories you are consuming.

So, make sure that what you are putting into your mouth is high in nutritional value, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients to help your body run efficiently; but not so much that your body has a hard time getting rid of the extra calories. Avoid processed foods and sugars if you can...instead, snack on mostly vegetables or one serving size of nuts or fruits when you are hungry. By eating this way, your body isn't

starving and has adequate nutrients to function at its optimal metabolic state.

When we talk about foods, we frequently forget about our water intake. I am a big fan of green teas and water. Your body needs water to function optimally. So, in trying to keep your metabolism running at its best, you cannot forget about water consumption. If you can't stand the way plain water tastes, try dropping a small amount of fruits or cucumber or vegetables into your water to give it some natural flavoring. This way, your water doesn't taste as bland and you'll get the nutrients of the fruits and vegetables in the water.

Lastly, don't forget that your body needs rest and relaxation to be able to repair, regenerate, and recuperate from your daily activities and functioning. So, make sure you are getting plenty of sleep and try to go to sleep and wake up around the same time every day to help your body maintain its usual rhythms and cycles. Decreasing long term stress with relaxation and sleep also can be beneficial to your metabolic functioning.

So, if you can remember just five tips towards revving up your metabolism this winter season, remember that you need to:

1. Keep active and incorporate daily exercise or movement into your daily routine.
2. Stay hydrated to optimize physiological functioning.
3. Get plenty of rest and relaxation to decrease stress and fatigue.
4. Eat a mostly plant-based anti-inflammatory diet.
5. Avoid processed foods and sugars.

Talk to your chiropractor about other ways you can boost your metabolism.

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**Dr. Julie T. Chen** is board-certified in internal medicine and fellowship-trained and board-certified in integrative medicine. She has her own medical practice in San Jose, Calif. She is the medical director of corporation wellness at several Silicon Valley-based corporations, is on several medical expert panels of Web sites and nonprofit organizations, is a recurring monthly columnist for several national magazines, and has been featured in radio, newspaper, and magazine interviews. She incorporates various healing modalities into her practice including, but is not limited to, medical acupuncture, Chinese scalp acupuncture, clinical hypnotherapy, strain-counterstrain osteopathic manipulations, and biofeedback. To learn more, visit [www.makinghealthyez.com](http://www.makinghealthyez.com).

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