

Want to speed up your metabolism? Let's have a diet talk

March is the official National Nutrition Month and I usually take this opportunity to elevate my nutrition messages a little higher. Here we are in March, the beginning of spring and the diet talk continues to trend well beyond New Years day. Not a day goes by without some kind of nutrition related news. Whether is a new research, a food recall, new dietary guidelines, or a new diet; you are going to be reminded about your health and nutrition choices probably just about every day.

If you are feeling like you are ready to pick up where you left your New Years resolutions, but you are tired of depriving yourself by following one of the newest fad diets, this article is written and dedicated just for you.

There are millions of diets along with very expensive products available today that claim to provide you with everything you need to help you lose weight or speed up your metabolism like never before. However, I can tell you that after practicing for over 30 years, the real formula to lose weight or "speed up your metabolism" has not change = if you eat less than what you are used to eating, you will lose weight. And if you add exercise to the formula, you may even loose the weight a little faster and may be able to enjoy a little bit more food as you are burning those extra calories. Well, that is easier said than done. I understand about the cravings, especially those that come between 2 and 4 pm. They are not easy to resist, so how can people actually pick the right weight loss plan while not falling for the latest fad diet? Here I have compiled my top five diet tips that have proven time after time to give you the best results without making you lose your mind and desire to continue your weight loss journey.

Daily activity – Nothing beats burning more calories like exercising for a longer period of time. To reap the fat burning benefits, one must stay active for at least 60 minutes. This is a sure fat burner that will get your body engine awoken.

Drink your veggies

As a picky eater, I was not a fan of vegetables until I started juicing them and mixing them with some fruits. It is amazing how quickly you can meet your 2-1/2 cups vegetable recommendations in one sitting. Invest in a good blender and start experimenting with a few combinations. I love mixing carrots with citrus fruits or berries with beets. The options are endless.

Beat the snack attack

Americans love to snack. [Nielsen 2014 Global Snacking Report](#) showed total annual snack sales at \$374 billion in 2014. Predicting snacking to be the new meal replacement opportunity. Americans spend the day snacking instead of eating three meals per day. However, one can easily consume 400 plus calories in one snack so let's plan some smart snacks that are satisfying, full of nutrients with no more than 200 calories each. For a number of ideas see the side bar below. I particularly LOVE snacking on fruits such as mandarins. They are sweet, easy-to-peel, and only 50 calories! Or bananas with almond butter or my afternoon go to, whole grain crackers with a low fat cheese.

Practice Mindfulness

According to the [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#), Mindfulness is the practice of complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis. Mindfulness is simply the art of focusing on the moment. We live such busy lives leaving us with no time to eat and enjoy our meals. Studies have shown the benefits of focusing on our hunger cues, taking the time to chewing each bite (15 times recommended) and to savoring and enjoying each bite. Most recently I attended a conference where we explored the Umami sense, which is considered the six sense along with the other well known senses – touch, vision, hear, smell, and taste. I particularly enjoy taking the time to enjoy a meal that brings that six Umami sense to live. Hope you have more Umami meals.

Swap instead of sacrifice

I am the master of swapping food items for lower calorie food items without sacrificing taste. For example, it is easy to use fat free milk and yogurt in recipes. Try using more fresh herbs, citrus juices or more spices such as cinnamon, vanilla and ginger to decrease salt and sugar in your recipes. Or simply by taking off the skin and visible fat of meats you can reduce saturated fats and calories. The swapping possibilities are endless.

Stay hydrated

A must to start hydrating your body from the minute you wake up. Place a large glass of water the night before and drink it first thing every morning. Don't like water? New recommendations state that most liquids count as well as fruits and veggies with high water content. Therefore soups, fruits such as Mandarins, watermelon, cucumbers, tea, coffee and low calorie beverages count towards your 13 cups liquid requirement. Just be mindful of the calories.

Side Bar

2 small Mandarin oranges = 100 calories
24 raw almonds = 80 calories
1/2 cup dried high fiber cereal = 100 calories
1 cup raw jicama, = 100 calories
1 hard boiled egg = 70 calories
1 mini semisoft cheese round = 70 calories
1 cream cheese wedge = 50 calories
8 ounces low calorie beverage = 30 to 50 calories