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INCREASE metabolism – slim, healthy and full of energy at last!

The metabolism is a highly sought-after process which functions as the body's own engine for health, energy and vitality. We may be eager to increase metabolism with the aim of getting closer to our dream body, yet we suppress it every day with an unhealthy diet, overeating and a lack of exercise. What can we do to keep the metabolism working effectively? We can do a lot – and the key is already in our hands. Or rather, in our gut.

Diabetes and gout are two of the most common by-products of an unhealthy gut. But high cholesterol, elevated triglycerides, excess weight, insomnia, lethargy, burn-out, allergies, food intolerances and skin complaints also indicate that metabolism is not at its best. Our days are a continuous loop of rushed, often sweet snacks between meals, ready-made lunches with helpings of emails to read on the side, too many cups of coffee, an excess of biscuits, and then a quick dash home for salt-laden nibbles... This lifestyle does not rev the metabolism into action, instead it leaves us increasingly stressed and can lead to chronic illness.

What exactly is metabolism?

Everyone is talking about the Fast Metabolism Diet. But very few people actually know what metabolism is. Essentially it involves countless processes in the body that provide – and consume – energy, as well as transporting substances to cells, converting them and carrying them away again. Carbohydrates, protein and fats are first digested, then processed in various metabolic pathways and further converted into new substances. A distinction is made between catabolic and anabolic metabolic processes. Anabolic metabolism involves the forming of substances in the body. Catabolism causes the body to fall back on its reserves when it receives insufficient nutrients and energy from food.

Look after your liver

The liver is the central and largest metabolic organ and fundamentally responsible for the detoxification of the body. It stores everything and shows no mercy! Anything that pollutes the liver damages the entire metabolic system. Inadequate gut function, particularly maldigestion, can be caused by repeated unhealthy choices like excessive alcohol consumption, an unbalanced, nutrient-poor diet, smoking and/or physical and emotional stress – all of which are toxic for the liver as well as our metabolism.

Metabolism dos and don'ts

How good our metabolism is and how fast we burn energy depends on various factors: muscle mass, hormonal balance, age, genes and – of course – lifestyle. Dr Irene Brunhuber, GP, Mayr physician and metabolism expert at the Park Igls in Tyrol, one of the leading Mayr clinics, explains what you can do to increase metabolism.

Give your metabolism a boost – 6 steps to a healthy gut!

1. Food – fewer calories, more nutrients

The first and most important precept to increase metabolism, improve metabolic rate and encourage a healthy gut is: eat a healthy and balanced diet. By balanced, we mean plenty of essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals and trace elements. We should always try to prioritise nutrient-dense foods, i.e. foods that are low in calories and rich in nutrients. As well as vegetables, recommended foods include pulses, nuts, cereals, fruit and low-fat meat and fish. Some ingredients, such as hot spices like chilli and ginger, actually help to speed up metabolic processes,' explains Dr Brunhuber. She also warns against crash diets. 'When we are hungry, the body curbs the resting metabolic rate and metabolism slows down. This is very useful and, in the past, has saved people from starvation. Today, however, this can be seen in the yo-yo effect experienced after crash dieting.'

2. Excess weight – portion size matters!

Metabolism expert Dr Brunhuber has a positive message for anyone struggling to achieve their ideal weight: 'Especially as we get older, it doesn't hurt to carry a few extra pounds; they make it easier for us to survive serious diseases.' However, obesity poses a serious risk to health at any age, and adversely affects not only the metabolism, but also the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems. It is important to find a healthy balance when it comes to nutrition. 'Don't be too strict with yourself. We can all indulge every now and then! If your gut is healthy and your metabolism is working properly, the body will cope just fine. Just remember to go for quality over quantity!'

3. Don't stress – especially about eating!

Next to 'what and how much should I eat?', 'how should I eat?' is just as important a question. 'This is particularly important for insulin levels. If you eat a carbohydrate-heavy meal very fast, your blood sugar level rises and fat-burning is blocked for a few hours. Chronic stress also has an adverse effect on metabolism, largely because it affects hormonal balance,' Dr Brunhuber warns. In short, strength comes with rest.

4. Regular exercise – building muscle

Both our metabolic rate and metabolism benefit from regular exercise, especially with increasing age when metabolism changes, reveals the GP and Mayr physician. 'This begins at 40! Unless we take action, muscle mass will drop year by year and our body fat will increase. Fat cells burn significantly fewer calories than muscle cells, making it more difficult to maintain your weight – particularly if you don't exercise or if you eat the wrong things.' Oestrogen levels drop, causing women to store more fat around their abdomen, while men produce less testosterone, leading to decreased muscle mass. Regular training can break this vicious cycle.

5. Intestinal examinations for over-50s

For effective early detection of metabolic disorders, Dr Brunhuber recommends intestinal examinations from the age of 50. 'If you suffer from chronic bowel inflammation or an immediate family member has been diagnosed with colon cancer, you are at increased risk, so you should start having colonoscopies earlier in life. Everyone should also be tested annually for hidden blood in the stool.'

6. Fighting metabolic disorders with Modern Mayr Medicine

Detoxing the body combats diabetes, gout and other chronic complaints. For symptoms that can be ascribed to metabolic disorders, Dr Brunhuber recommends a Modern Mayr Medicine Metabolism & Detox therapeutic module. 'We use dietary and therapeutic treatments to detox the body and revive metabolic processes. Our therapeutic module begins with an integrated health check with numerous laboratory tests. Expanded laboratory blood tests serve as a basis for designing or fine-tuning a personalised programme that includes an exercise and activity programme with a professional trainer. From liver compresses to lymphatic drainage and detox baths, the holistic medical programme detoxes the body and results in a long-term improvement to quality of life. The chronic nature of a condition can be overcome with specific treatments that also steer general health in a promising direction.' Regular Mayr Prevent® Medicine treatments help the gut stay healthy in the long term and ensure the metabolism is working properly.

The Mayr Metabolism and Detox therapy module includes:

Initial examination – integrated health check | 1 medical examination – manual abdominal treatment | Concluding examination | 1 bioimpedance measurement (lean tissue, water and body fat) | Expanded laboratory blood tests | 1 personal training session | 3 partial body massages | 2 lymphatic drainages or full body massages | 3 liver compresses with beeswax | 2 metabolic detox baths | Daily Kneipp treatments | Personal Modern Mayr cuisine diet plan | Mineral water, herbal tea and base broth | Exercise sessions, anti-stress exercises and mental coaching sessions | Lectures | Use of swimming pool, sauna and panoramic gym

Price: 1 week Metabolism and Detox €1,892 per person excluding accommodation (from €148 pp/day in a Standard double room)

About the Park Igls Mayr clinic, Tyrol

Park Igls Mayr clinic is one of Europe's leading medi-spas. At the 'house in the park', guests are offered bespoke exercise, nutrition and regeneration programmes as well as state-of-the-art diagnostic services – all of which are based on Modern Mayr Medicine's ground-breaking concepts. In addition to its own medical department and a destination spa, guests at Park Igls enjoy spacious relaxation rooms, fitness studios and a well-equipped gym. Modern Mayr cuisine is an integral component of the innovative services on offer. Park Igls is unique in the world: unlike other destinations, preventive medicine at Park Igls Mayr clinic is based on six not four Mayr principles. In addition to cleansing, supplementing, self-discovery and exercise, the guests at Park Igls also benefit from 'learning how to chew and eat' and 'resting the digestive tract'. The Mayr clinic in Tyrol has won multiple awards for being one of the most effective medi-spas.

Glossary

- **Metabolism:** Processes in the body that provide energy and consume energy in order to transport, convert and break down substances.
- **Catabolism:** Metabolic processes in which the body falls back on its reserves.
- **Anabolism:** Metabolic processes involved in forming substances in the body.
- **Resting metabolic rate:** The energy our body needs to maintain its everyday resting functions.
- **Colonoscopy:** Inspection of the colon, an endoscopic screening method and the most effective way to detect colon carcinomas at an early stage.

Reservations: www.park-igls.at / +43 512 377305

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PRESS CONTACT niche destinations | marketing deluxe

Claudia Reichenberger | Managing Director | claudia.reichenberger@marketing-deluxe.at

Marlene Fuchs | Senior PR Consultant | marlene.fuchs@marketing-deluxe.at

Wopfnerstrasse 9, 6130 Schwaz/Tyrol, Austria

T +43 5242 61115

press@marketing-deluxe.at