

How to Shed Pounds Fast This Summer

For many, summer weight loss is about getting into that bathing suit and feeling your best. With summer vacation just around the corner, what can you do now that will make a difference?

A few simple steps from our diet plan can help tame your tummy while supporting your health. It's a great time to try new foods that speed metabolism, which can allow you to lose the extra pounds and feel lighter.

Weight-loss tip 1: Get seven to eight hours of sleep. Not getting enough sleep could leave you drowsy—and heavier. Health research from the University of Wisconsin indicates that lack of sleep can interfere with the weight-loss hormone leptin. Leptin is a naturally occurring hormone in the body that helps to curb appetite and improve metabolism. The research found that seven to eight hours of sleep per night went along with higher levels of leptin.

Weight-loss tip 2: Eat omega-3 fats. Another way to help make leptin work for you is to eat foods containing healthy omega-3 fats. Studies at the University of Western Australia showed that a weight-loss diet high in omega-3 fats enhanced the body's production of leptin, in comparison to a regular weight-loss diet. Foods that are rich sources of omega-3 fats include walnuts, salmon and tuna. A rich source of omega-3 fats is flaxseed. Research indicates the health benefits of ground flaxseed are abundant and that it may include the ability to lower cholesterol and fight inflammation.

Weight-loss tip 3: Refresh yourself with tea. When you're thirsty, you can slug down a lot of sugar and empty calories without noticing. If that frosty drink tastes like a

milkshake, it probably has hundreds of calories and maybe even a few grams of fat. Instead of drinking your calories, make it a healthy habit to enjoy iced beverages without added sugar or artificial sweeteners. Regular brown tea and green tea contain beneficial nutrients that have been shown to enhance health. Green tea has also been identified as one of the foods that speeds metabolism. Nothing could be easier than brewing your own iced tea. Simply brew the tea the same way you would when making hot tea, but make it a little stronger so it stands up to ice. Then place the brewed tea in the refrigerator and let it chill. Add a little fresh lemon or lime to taste.

Weight-loss tip 4: Enjoy seasonal foods. You already know vegetables are good for you. But research now shows vegetables are powerful weight-loss allies. They contain powerful nutrients that can help turn on your fat-burning hormones, control your appetite and keep you youthful. Romaine lettuce can boost the levels of antioxidants in your body, protecting against the effects of aging. Green bell peppers contain lutein and zeaxanthin. They also contain carotenoids, which are important for maintaining healthy vision. Eating onions and garlic can promote detoxification. The list is endless, but the bottom line is this: Make sure to put vegetables into your routine. For optimum nutrition, try to have nine to 10 servings per day of fruits and vegetables.

Weight-loss tip 5: Get moving. With temperatures going up, you may be tempted to hibernate in the air conditioning. Get your body and metabolism moving again by finding creative ways to move your body. Not only can exercise burn fat, but it can also tone and build muscle and reduce stress. Pick cooler times of day to take a walk—early in the morning or in the evening. Walk in an air-conditioned shopping center. Walk back and forth in the shallow end of a swimming pool. Or simply move around your house. Always exercise smart by drinking plenty of water and taking breaks. Of course, avoid overheating and working out in the midday sun!

Summertime provides motivation for getting in shape and adopting a healthy lifestyle. Exercise, adequate sleep and trying a few foods that speed metabolism can help put you on the road to achieving weight loss goals.

Start today with a free online diet plan at .

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