

## **Rebuild Your Metabolism: The Five keys to losing Fat and Keeping it off!**

**By Keats Snideman CSCS, LMT, NMT**

The following article will explain 5 key tips to losing unwanted body fat and keeping it off permanently. These guidelines are not gimmicks or quick fix weight loss solutions where you end up gaining the weight back. Rather, they are time-tested science backed principles of how the human body responds to changes in exercise and nutritional habits. Let's get started!

### **Tip #1- Increase your muscle mass!**

The fastest way to enhance your body's ability to burn fat is to increase your muscle tissue or "lean body mass." This is best accomplished by participating in a strength-training program 3-4 days per week depending on your goals. As a rule of thumb, free weight exercises including barbell, dumbbell, and pulley movements are your best choice as they develop functional "real world" strength compared to exercise machines. By increasing your muscle mass by even a few pounds, you will be burning more calories and fat all day long because muscle is a very metabolically active tissue. The more muscle you have the more calories you can eat without getting fat! That is reason alone to engage in a strength-training program.

Additionally, increasing muscle mass will add shape and tone to flabby or soft areas of your body that will greatly enhance your self-esteem when wearing revealing clothes or bathing suits. However, since strength training is potentially harmful if performed incorrectly, it is imperative that you get the proper instruction and program designed by a competent and experienced fitness or strength training professional.

### **Tip #2- Increase your meal frequency!**

In addition to strength training, the next quickest way to enhance your metabolic rate is to increase the number of meals you eat per day. Many people trying to lose fat make the mistake of only eating 2-3 times per day. Big mistake! Every time you eat, especially if there is protein in the meal, your body's metabolism is spiked for the next 2-3 hours. This is because your body has to "heat up" just to digest and assimilate the food. This effect is called the *thermic effect of food (TEF)* and it is a prime reason to up your meal frequency.

However, you cannot just eat anything you want during these meals or you will not get the right effect. Each meal **must** contain some protein, carbohydrates and even a little fat!

### **Tip #3- Increase your intake of healthy fats!**

Contrary to popular belief, dietary fat is not the evil villain some people make it out to be. Some fats, called *essential fatty acids (EFA's)* are even essential for health. The two essential fatty acids are called *alpha linolenic acid* (aka Omega-3) and *linoleic acid* (aka Omega-6). Studies show that the standard American diet is plentiful or even excessive in Omega-6 fatty acids (found in most vegetable oils), which has even been shown to increase the risk of some cancers. Conversely, the typical diet is very deficient in Omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids are crucial to good health and are required for healthy glandular, cellular, immune, and cardiovascular function. Deficiencies in EFA's (especially Omega-3) can accelerate many types of disease states. From a metabolic point of view, Omega-3 fatty acids increase cellular processes and thus metabolic rate. You heard it right, *here is a fat that actually helps you burn fat!*

Good sources of Omega-3 fatty acids include certain fish (trout, salmon, mackerel, sardines, tuna, and eel), certain nuts and seeds (flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds and walnuts) and even various algae's (blue and red). Flax seed oil is probably the

cheapest and most accessible form of Omega-3 fatty acids available and can be taken in a protein shake with good results. Whatever you do, DO NOT cook or heat these nutritional oils, as the fatty acids are very unstable and prone to rancidity when heated. Anywhere from 2-5 tablespoons of flax-oil may be appropriate for a given individual. Some experts even advocate up to 1 tablespoon of an EFA-rich oil such as flax for every 50 pounds of bodyweight. Talk to a competent nutritionist or doctor regarding your particular case. Also, see Udo Erasmus' monumental book on fats called *Fats that Heal, Fats that Kill* for more information on fats and their importance for our health and longevity.

#### **Tip #4- Get out and sweat 3-4 days per week!**

Another important factor in losing bodyfat and keeping it off is to increase your aerobic and anaerobic capacity. In other words, you need to "get in shape" by partaking in general fitness activities (sports, recreational activities, etc...) or specific exercise sessions dedicated to improving your general conditioning. A great activity to start this is by just walking or hiking. Make sure to move for at least 20 minutes and up to 45 minutes consecutively to improve your cardiovascular function. Also, by doing this, you will increase the number of *mitochondria* in your muscle cells which are the little furnaces which burn fat for fuel. A good rule of thumb is to alternate weight-training days with "sweat" days to help burn fat and improve your cardiovascular functioning (blood pressure, circulation, etc.) The "sweat" days also serve as a form of *active recovery* from your strength training workouts, which helps to decrease the stiffness and soreness often associated with resistance training exercises.

#### **Tip #5- Get more quality sleep per night!**

One of the real dilemmas facing our nation right now, besides the growing obesity epidemic, is that increasing amount of people who are chronically sleep-deprived. With a constant focus on activity and getting things done, people often cut back on valuable sleep time to make room for more business and personal tasks to perform. The end result is a chronically stressed body that may actually increase its stress hormone levels (e.g. *cortisol*) which has actually been shown to increase the deposition of bodyfat; especially around the mid-section. It's not surprising to me that many people, especially those over 30, have a hard time losing mid-section fat. Getting enough restful sleep is a rarity these days but is very important in the battle of the bulge. Try getting to sleep earlier if you can as the sleep acquired before midnight is supposedly more restful and restorative than the sleep after it. Also, if you're asleep, you aren't as likely to be in the refrigerator or pantry looking for goodies! On a final note, you are better off eating a healthy snack before bed than going to bed hungry. Modern research even shows that dieters who ate before bed actually lost more fat than those who stopped eating at 6 pm. Very interesting!

#### **Conclusion**

Hopefully these tips have been helpful. I urge you to attempt to incorporate as many of these tips as possible. The end result will be a leaner, healthier you. Good luck!

**About the author- Keats Snideman is the owner of Intelligent Fitness Coaching and is a strength and conditioning specialist who lives in Phoenix, Arizona. He specializes in the development of usable strength and athletic fitness for athletes and non-athletes alike. In the interests of injury prevention and enhanced recovery, Keats also holds a license in massage therapy with an emphasis on sports massage and Neuromuscular Therapy (NMT). He competes in sub-masters track and field as a 100/200-meter sprinter. Keats may be reached @ [ksnideman@lycos.com](mailto:ksnideman@lycos.com) or visit his website to sign up for his free newsletter at [www.keatssnideman.com](http://www.keatssnideman.com).**