

ASK A DOCTOR

Why is it that some people can eat more and stay thin? I seem to have to always be dieting.

ANSWER

There are ways of helping to raise your metabolism. "Metabolism is the amount of energy your body uses to maintain basic life functions, such as respiration and digestion." Genetics, age, body composition and temperature can affect the metabolism and cannot be altered to a great extent. Muscle burns up to four times more calories than fat even while resting. Strength-training is the best way to keep the calories burning long after the weights are set down. Other ways to boost your metabolism is:

- **Eat more often**. If you spread your calories between 5-6 small meals per day, your body stores fewer of the calories as fat. Waiting long periods between meals slows your metabolism because your body thinks it is starving and attempts to conserve energy.
- **Get you heart pumping**. Aerobic exercise uses a lot of calories but also trims fat and makes more room for muscle.
- **Be wary of stimulants**. Ephedrine, caffeine, and aspirin can boost your metabolism, but only temporarily. Your body eventually adapts to them.

No matter how you spend your day, there is help to stay trim by incorporating these metabolism-boosting tactics.