

11 Weight Loss 'Magic Bullets' That Actually Work

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Whether it's weight gained during a pregnancy, stressful time, hormonal flux, or that you feel like you've been carrying all your life, losing weight can feel like an uphill battle. It's no wonder we look for quick fixes or **magic bullets** that will peel excess pounds off more easily and effortlessly. While most doctors and nutritionists will tell you there is no such thing -- "just move more, eat less!" -- that's not *entirely* true.

Certain foods, workout methods, and behaviors *can* work a bit like a magic bullet. We rounded up 11 of the best go-to, effective tricks for upping your weight loss game. Check 'em out below, then tell us: **Which of these have you tried, and how did it work for you?**

Interval Training

High-intensity interval training, or HIIT, is a type of workout characterized by a number of bursts of intense exercise (like biking or sprinting) followed by a brief rest period (like walking). Many trainers think it's the most effective form of cardio, because the constant switch-up from high to low intensity encourages the body to use fat as fuel. In other words, you'll actually get the results you want out of this kind of workout.

'Heating Up' Your Food

No, we're not talking about actually making it warm in temperature. More like adding a bit of spice in the form of chili powder or hot sauce. "Chili peppers have a compound called capsaicin that gives them a fiery zip, heats up the body, and fires up your metabolism, aiding you in your efforts to burn off excess fat and calories," explains personal trainer and certified nutritionist **Franci Cohen**. What's more, capsaicin has also been shown to satisfy hunger. Win-win!

Water

Maybe water sounds like, well, *just* water, but it can actually have a powerful effect. "Water will not only help flush you out but will actually make you feel full and put a kibosh on confusing hunger triggers," shares Allison Hagendorf, certified health coach, FitToFeast.com. "Many times we choose to snack when really all we need to do is sip. Go with H2O." She recommends "sipping water continuously throughout the day, drinking a minimum of 2 liters. Better yet? Try for 3."

Calcium

Even if you're not a dairy fan, making sure you get enough calcium could aid in blasting fat. The nutrient actually assists the body metabolize fat more efficiently by increasing the rate at which it gets rid of fat as waste, according to research from the University of Copenhagen.

Green Tea

"Green tea contains a substance known as epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), which boosts metabolism," explains **Cohen**. "EGCG is an antioxidant that supports the function of the hormone and neurotransmitter norepinephrine, which is responsible for sending signals to the brain, instructing it to break down fat cells." Whoa. Now, if that doesn't sound magical, we don't know *what* does!

Grapefruit

No need to go on a full-fledged grapefruit diet, but the pink-hued citrus is a smart pick if you want solid weight loss results. "Starting your day with a healthy breakfast including grapefruit, can definitely help you shed pounds in the long run," notes **Cohen**. That's because "grapefruit helps your body dissolve fat and cholesterol deposits in the body," she explains. "And it also jump starts your metabolism a bit."

Cross Training

"Cross-training that involves different exercises, and that allows you to work and fluctuate between different energy zones (aerobic, anaerobic, etc.), will challenge the body in a way that will make you burn a greater amount of calories overall, which results in your desired weight loss," says **Cohen**. A couple great examples of cross-training combos: Running and yoga, or spinning and barre class.

Apple Cider Vinegar

"Apple cider vinegar has an anti-glycemic effect," notes Hagendorf. "The vinegar helps block some of your body's digestion of starch, and the acetic acid may also boost your body's ability to burn fat. Make sure you buy the unfiltered apple cider vinegar with that cloudy blob known as The Mother. This is what is full of probiotics and can aid in digestion and immune function."

Hagendorf recommends pouring a tablespoon or two into a large glass of ice water with a few drops of stevia for a morning eye-opening cocktail.

"It's hydration with a little kick to get you going!" she says.

Chicken Breast

"Chicken is a very lean source of protein, and has a high thermogenic effect," says **Cohen**. "Basically, this means that it fires up your body's internal furnace during the digestion process, sending your metabolism into overdrive!" Just be sure to buy organic when possible, because added hormones and antibiotics won't do much to complement your weight loss efforts!

High-Fiber Foods

"Your body burns much more calories digesting high-fiber foods -- like apples, lentils, or oats -- and these foods keep you filled longer, so your overall food consumption is reduced, which in turn will foster your weight loss efforts," says **Cohen**.

Cold-Brew Coffee

"A morning cold brew can stimulate thermogenesis, boosting metabolism," says Hagendorf. "The caffeine can also help suppress hunger and if you hit the gym in the morning, it will give you the jumpstart you need to maximize your workout."

And by cold brew, she doesn't mean simply plunking ice cubes into hot coffee. True cold-brewed java "steeps or soaks in room temp or cold water for an extended period. Because the coffee beans in cold-press never come into contact with heated water, the process of leaching flavor from the beans

produces a different chemical profile than conventional brewing methods. The result? A smoother, naturally sweeter, rounder coffee [that's] better for both your digestive tract and teeth!"