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Fact or Fiction: Does Apple Cider Vinegar Boost Metabolism?

If you haven't already tried apple cider vinegar (an ancient folk remedy used to cure a variety of health conditions), maybe it's time you should. A new year often brings with it hefty weight-loss goals, so anything that can help boost your efforts might be worth trying. But the real question is: Does it actually work?

We turned to **nutritionist and fitness trainer Franci Cohen** and Derek Johnson, corporate director of nutrition for The Biggest Loser Resort, for the answer.



The Facts

"Apple cider vinegar does not increase metabolic function, but it has been proven to aid in fat loss for various reasons," says Cohen. "Vinegar is effective at reducing the speed at which glucose (sugar) enters the blood, thereby lowering blood sugar levels. This is an asset to both diabetics and those looking to lose weight."

Johnson adds, "The process of

metabolism has many moving parts—it's affected by sleep, exercise and digestion. It is why skipping breakfast can cause weight gain by slowing down your metabolism and increasing hunger later in the day. If you had apple cider vinegar before eating doughnuts, it would have no effect on the fat-storing properties of insulin. That being said, some studies do show that apple cider vinegar can help with sugar levels in a healthy diet."

How It Works

Studies show that too much acidity in the body has been linked to weight gain. "Apple cider vinegar does the opposite by helping to alkalize the body (balance acidity levels), which therefore aids in weight loss," says Cohen. It also acts as an appetite suppressant (telling your brain not to crave snacks all day), and assists your stomach in digestion and the breakdown of food for energy.

Adding It Into Your Diet

According to Cohen, the most effective way to consume apple cider vinegar is to drink 1-2 teaspoons (there are about three calories per tsp.), mixed into a glass of water before each meal three times a day. The taste is a little hard to get used to (honestly, I'm not sure you ever really get used to it), so I found that pinching my nose shut and downing it quickly like a shot of strong medicine was the best method. Johnson says it also works well as a salad dressing—think of it as an amped-up vinaigrette of sorts.