



The NEAT Thing Missing from Your Wellness Journey

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You're working out thirty minutes a day, you're eating pretty well, but you still feel sluggish and you're not losing weight...what gives?

You might be missing a major ingredient to the health and fitness recipe. According to research provided by ultimateperformance.com, energy expenditure can be broken up into two categories: exercise activity thermogenesis and non-exercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT). Put simply, exercise activity thermogenesis refers to your active efforts to burn more calories (such as your workouts at the Y or attending a yoga class) while NEAT refers to the calories you burn doing other movement throughout the day

It is important to distinguish the difference between the two, though, and to make sure you're consistently hitting your NEAT calories. For those of you who have desk jobs, the toughest obstacle to upping your NEAT calories is the lack of movement at your job. What does a typical day for you consist of? Are you constantly on the move OR are you deskbound, with your movement limited to grabbing lunch, a run to a meeting or a trip to the bathroom? Manual labor professionals, hairdressers, waiters and waitresses, etc. will naturally have much higher levels of NEAT compared to that of the average 9-5 office goer. But, you may also be quite sedentary at home! How much time do you spend watching TV or sitting using your digital devices?

"Ok Kate, well what if I DO work in an office or spend a lot of time on the couch, am I a lost cause?" No! Of course not. But you will have to put in more of a conscious effort to keep up with your active counterparts. Instead of emailing or instant messaging a co-worker, try walking to their desk. Do you usually park on the first floor about 20 steps from the building? Switch it up, park on the fifth floor, maybe 100 steps away. Next time you go to print

something, send it to the communal printer instead of the one arms-length away. When you're at home watching TV, set a goal to get up at each commercial. You could even do some calisthenics! Or even better, reduce the # of nights you put the TV on! Take a class, visit a friend, take a walk around the block. These changes will require more energy (the goal!) and more forethought BUT they have the power to transform your day from 300 NEAT calories to 1,000+. Think about that. You could burn 700 more calories per day by slightly switching up your routine and being more mindful of your habits.

It's time to stop thinking of our workouts as the only time we should be moving throughout the day. Our bodies are designed to be in motion, not sitting for eight plus hours, five days a week. And technological advances such as ridesharing, online-shopping and meal-delivery services are not helping with this notion. Sure, they're convenient, but they're also quietly limiting our movement. Activities like catching a quick ride instead of walking the easy 20 minutes or purchasing your groceries at the click of a button instead of meandering the aisles trying to remember which cereal your kid likes this week.

You know how the saying goes, 'If you don't use it, you'll lose it.' Once we stop moving, we'll start losing the ability to feel good when we do. The aches, pains and weight gain will indefinitely come.

Do you want to still feel amazing when you're 70, 80, 90 years old?? Then stop always choosing convenience over movement. My challenge for you today is to make one small change. Nothing crazy. Just something that is going to help you move more while increasing those NEAT calories. Small changes eventually become big ones. I believe in you. Let's do this!

