

The effects of exercise on your appetite

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Are you hungry after you exercise? That might not be a problem if you're at a healthy weight, but if you're trying to shed extra pounds, the calories you take in could replace the ones you just worked so hard to

burn off.

For decades, researchers have tried to find out whether the intensity and/or duration of [exercise](#) could play a role in limiting hunger immediately and in the hours afterwards. Some, but not all, studies found that very [high-intensity interval training](#) (or HIIT) can cut your appetite. HIIT typically involves alternating 30 or 60 seconds of all-out effort with one to two minutes of rest, a pattern that you repeat for the 20 to 30 minutes of a [workout](#).

Other research found that longer workouts, up to 90 minutes, are effective at dampening hunger. Another plus: A study review found that if you want to burn fat, the longer your [exercise session](#), the more you'll burn. Problem is, many people aren't able to work such long workouts into most days.

Adding another wrinkle is that men and women seem to have different responses to exercise, making it impossible to suggest any one-routine-fits-all generalization. The answer? Try out different exercise timing and duration options to see which one has the best [hunger](#)-cutting effect on you. You might even find that exercise on an empty stomach first thing in the morning creates a different response than when you exercise after a full breakfast.

Hunger aside, remember that exercise alone won't result in significant weight loss, but it's excellent for building calorie-burning muscle and for overall health, so make sure it's part of your overall wellness plan.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more to help you [understand hunger](#) and listen to its cues.

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