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HERE'S WHY TAKING A COLD SHOWER MIGHT BOOST YOUR METABOLISM



When we first heard of a report that [hot showers can slow metabolism](#), it caused a bit of an uproar. After all, what's better than a long hot shower (or bath) at the end of a stressful day? It's basically an advertisement for the whole self-care movement. Surely there can't be anything bad about a steamy shower, right?

Metabolism, the process by which your body converts what you eat into energy, is affected by everything from [fiber intake](#) to quality of sleep. But the temperature of the water when you take a shower? I reached out to gastroenterologist and internist [Niket Sonpal](#), MD, and family medicine doctor and herbalist Aviva Romm, MD, to fact check the claim.

“Hot showers are great for relaxing muscles and clearing sinuses, but they aren't helpful—or harmful—to your metabolism,” says Dr. Sonpal. “After meals, try to wait at least an hour before heading into the shower. Like swimming, showering can [slow down digestion](#) as blood is flowing to other parts of the body.”

“Cold showers, on the other hand, make it so that your body has to heat up to regulate its temperature,” he says. When you're cold, your body shivers in order to warm itself up, which requires energy (aka burning calories). Such a boost in your metabolism is one of the benefits of a cold shower, which can help with weight management, says Dr. Sonpal.

“A brisk cold shower can be very invigorating and give your metabolism a quick boost,” says Dr. Romm. “One of my daily practices is to end my hot shower with a very brief cool rinse.” (It's [great for your pores](#), too, she adds.)

In this case, the doctors say the opposite is not true: hot showers aren't going to slow down your metabolism, if that's what you're worried about. “There is no reason that hot showers, per se, are bad for metabolism, and in fact, people have been using hot saunas, for example, for eons for health,” says Dr. Romm, “and health starts with good metabolism.”

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