

## Endorphins—

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may be caused by low dopamine levels. When we don't get adequate protein, dopamine levels drop and this makes us mentally sluggish.

The best way to raise dopamine levels, get plenty of lean protein in your diet, with moderate fat and carbs, advises Nan Allison.

### *You Need Carbs Before You Exercise*

It's a mistake to think that exercising without adequate carbs in your system will help you lose body fat. Nan Allison explains:

Many people mistakenly believe that if they limit their carbohydrate intake, and then exercise, their body fat will be broken down. What happens, in fact, is that they are lowering their capacity to burn fat, and will lower their metabolism. The reason for this is that the body will break down muscle to form carbohydrate. In addition, the muscle breakdown raises stress hormone levels and causes carbohydrate cravings.

### *High-Intensity Exercise Performs Best*

Researchers have shown for years that high-intensity exercise increases these hormones significantly.

"Post-exercise beta-endorphin levels correlated with the peak speed attained during the sprint and the subjects peak power to weight ratio. These results suggest that the increases in plasma adrenaline are related to those factors that reflect the stress of the exercise and the contribution of anaerobic metabolism." (Exercise intensity-related responses of beta-endorphin and catecholamines, 1987, McMurray).

### *The Take Home*

When we experience strong cravings for sugar and high fat foods, it's probably due to a low hormone level that can be resolved with a sensible food choice.

When it comes to diet, the research is clear, the best diet is a balanced diet / in moderation.

Remember to get some high-quality carbs before workouts. This will help fuel the intensity of the workout, and increase, not lower your metabolism.

Have a great day!

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