

# IMPACT

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Extension

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## Idaho county residents learn how metabolism affects weight loss

### AT A GLANCE

**Lifestyle changes and following nutritional guidelines can improve overall metabolism and increase metabolic rate, resulting in weight loss.**

### The Situation

Information obtained from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) showed an estimated 2/3 (68%) of American adults are overweight (Body Mass Index [BMI]  $\geq 25$ ) or obese (BMI  $\geq 30$ ), and an estimated 23 million children are either overweight or obese! The prevalence of overweight adults in Idaho has increased significantly in the past decade, from 55.7% in 2000, to 62.3% in 2011. About one-in four (27%) adults in Idaho are listed as obese (Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, 2011). Behavior, environment, and genetics can all play a role in one's health and weight. By understanding how the metabolic system works in general can influence one to make healthier choices and lead a healthier lifestyle.

### Our Response

It was this motivation that led me to create 'Metabolism & Me'. This is a program created to teach about the metabolic system and how it will aide in weight management improving overall health. One's metabolism is the body system that converts food calories to energy needed to sustain life and perform various tasks (i.e. pumping oxygen to muscles during aerobic exercise, repairing muscles after anaerobic exercise - strength training). We are all born with different metabolic rates based on our genetic make-up (gender, race, family-history, body composition). The Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) is influenced



Participants performing a recovery heart rate test.

by age, weight, height, gender, environmental temperature, dieting, and exercise habits. There are lifestyle changes that can be made and nutritional guidelines to follow to improve overall metabolism and increase metabolic rate. By increasing metabolic rate, this will not only burn calories at a higher rate, but also decrease blood pressure and risk of heart disease and diabetes.

### Program Outcomes

For the past five years, approximately 300 participants were provided a retrospective survey at the end of each program, inquiring on pre/post knowledge gained and behavior change as a result of attending 'Metabolism & Me' (see Table 1).

Table 1. Metabolism & Me Program Assessment (2008-2014)

Healthy Lifestyle Knowledge/Behavior	Gained/ Plan to Change
Increased understanding of the metabolic system as it relates to nutrition and exercise as a result of the 'Metabolism & Me' program.	76%
Willing to eat smaller portions, more frequently (5-6 times) throughout the day.	96%
Follow the USDA myPlate guidelines in meal preparation.	95%

Participants also provided comments on planned behavior change:

- “Eat breakfast”
- “Increase the minutes I exercise per week, when I can fit it into my schedule, even if it’s by ten minute intervals”
- “Eat more veggies/greens and fruit”
- “Read food labels, and watch out for unhealthy artificial sweeteners”
- “Choose foods that are more nutrient-rich and contain fewer calories”
- “Add more strength training to my exercise routines”
- “Use my hand as my guide to help me determine the right portion sizes”
- “Keep daily food/exercise logs”
- “Keep track of my Basal Metabolic Rate (calorie worksheet) and know how many calories I can eat each day to lose 1-2 lbs./week”
- “Drink more water”

**Cooperators and Co-Sponsors**

- Syringa General Hospital and Clinics
- Groaners Fitness Club
- The Gym
- St. Marys Physical Therapy Clinic

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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