

Why Your Diet Might Be Slowing Your Metabolism—and How to Stop It

By Robert Ferguson

When I coach people, my clients don't just learn how to enjoy what we call a **Fat-Burning Meal**—they also learn how to strategically indulge in a **BOOST MEAL**!

Why? Because it helps prevent the metabolic damage that happens to most people who diet and unknowingly wreck their metabolism. That damage is one of the biggest reasons people regain the weight they worked so hard to lose.

Let me explain by looking at a real-world example that made headlines—and shocked researchers.

What the *Biggest Loser* Taught Us About Metabolism

Every one of us has something called a **Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR)**—the number of calories your body burns at rest, doing absolutely nothing. In addition to BMR, we have what's called **Total Daily Energy Expenditure (TDEE)**, which includes calories burned from movement, digestion, and even small subconscious activity like fidgeting.

When you drastically cut calories, both BMR and TDEE drop. This is a natural defense mechanism your body uses to protect against starvation—but if you're not careful, it can backfire in a big way.

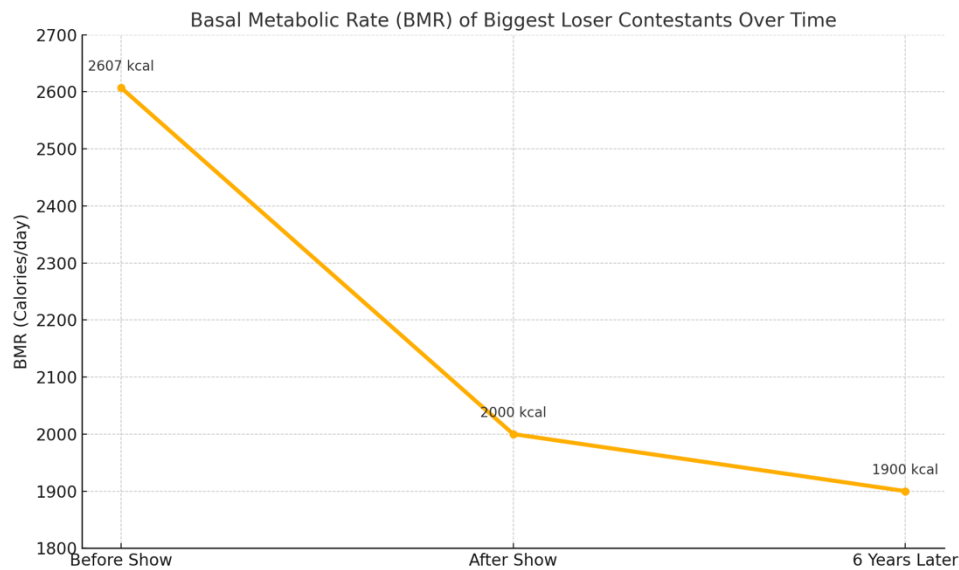
A study by the National Institutes of Health followed 14 contestants from Season 8 of *The Biggest Loser* reality show. These individuals lost massive amounts of weight quickly—but the study showed just how costly that approach was to their metabolism:

- **Before the show:** The average contestant weighed about 328 pounds and had a BMR of ~2,607 calories/day.
- **After the show:** Their average weight dropped to ~200 pounds, but their BMR also dropped significantly—to about 2,000 calories/day.
- **Six years later:** Many had regained much of the weight, but their metabolism stayed suppressed—down to about 1,900 calories/day. That's over **700 fewer calories burned per day**, even though they were back near their original weight.

This condition, known as **adaptive thermogenesis**, makes it incredibly difficult to keep weight off—and is a key reason most people regain the weight they lose through crash dieting.

Chart 1: Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) Over Time

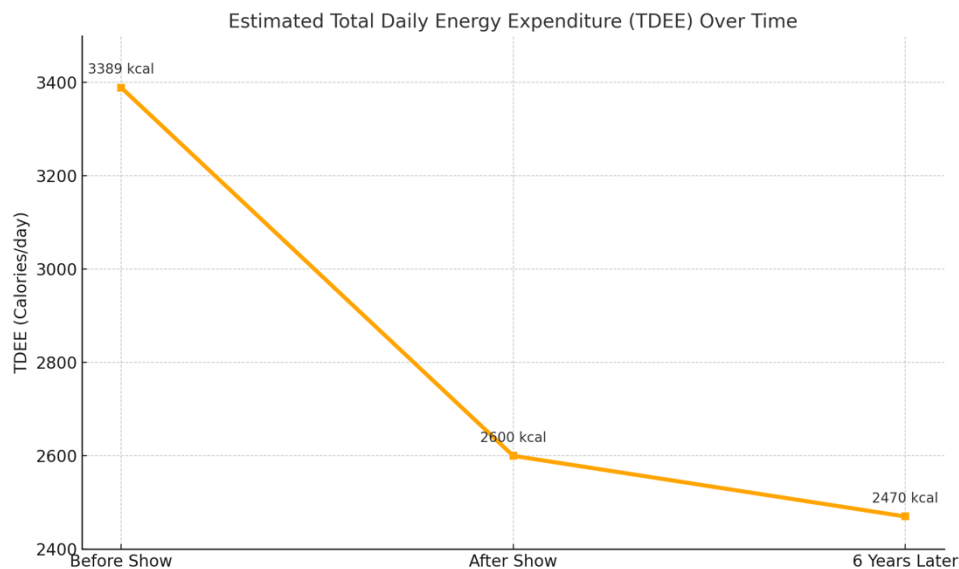
This chart shows the decline in resting metabolism for *Biggest Loser* contestants:



Basal Metabolic Rate dropped over 700 calories/day and remained low even after weight regain.

Chart 2: Total Daily Energy Expenditure (TDEE) Over Time

Here's how their **total daily calorie burn** changed—even with normal activity levels:



TDEE declined drastically and remained suppressed--contributing to long-term weight regain.

The Vicious Cycle Most Dieters Don't See Coming

What happened to *The Biggest Loser* contestants isn't rare. It happens to almost everyone who tries to lose weight by simply eating less.

Here's how the cycle works:

1. You eat less and start losing weight.
2. Your BMR and TDEE drop as your body tries to conserve energy.
3. You eventually hit a plateau—and frustration kicks in.
4. You return to “normal” eating.
5. **BOOM**—you regain the weight (and often more), but your metabolism never fully recovers.

That's why so many people say, “I'm eating less than ever—and still gaining weight.”

What Is a BOOST MEAL?

I want to provide you with an overview of what a BOOST MEAL is—but let me be clear: it would be irresponsible of me to attempt to fully teach it here if you're not a client or working with one of our certified coaches.

Like all the food-combining strategies we teach, a BOOST MEAL has a purpose and is used with intention under the guidance of someone trained in the **Diet Free Life methodology**.

That said, here's what I *can* tell you:

- A **BOOST MEAL** is encouraged once a week while all other meals remain **Fat-Burning Meals**.
- It's not a “cheat” meal—it's a strategic part of the process to help keep your metabolism from adapting to reduced calorie intake.
- It also helps support your mental and emotional wellbeing by allowing flexibility and enjoyment without guilt.

Examples of a BOOST MEAL:

1. **Meat (protein), pasta (fast carb), bread (fast carb), sauce (condiment), and cheese (fat)**
2. **Chicken (protein), chips and tortillas (fast carbs), vegetables and beans (slow carbs), cheese (fat)**
3. **Burger (protein, fast carb, slow carb)** including patty, bun, tomato, lettuce, etc., **French fries (fast carb)**, with optional **cheese (fat)** and condiments (e.g., mustard, ketchup)

These meals are not random—they're planned and balanced in a way that supports your body's metabolism, prevents long-term slowdown, and makes fat loss sustainable.

Knowledge Is Power

This is the conversation most weight loss programs are missing. If you're relying on willpower and restriction, you're setting yourself up for metabolic backlash.

That's why I created a science-based system and trained a growing network of certified coaches. We're here to help you get results that **last**—without wrecking your metabolism in the process.

If you're serious about making this your last time losing weight, sign up for my [free newsletter](#) and get ongoing insight into the smarter way to lose fat and improve your health—for life.

Feel free to email me at robert@dietfreelife.com with questions or to [schedule a free consultation](#) to learn more about my programs.

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