

Patient/Client Instructions: Measuring Your Resting Metabolism

Minimal measurement protocol
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The most accurate way to assess your nutritional needs is to measure your resting metabolism or the number of calories you burn each day to maintain your normal body functions, such as heart rate, breathing, and brain activity. This is considered your resting metabolic rate and is done by measuring the amount of oxygen you consume (breathe in) and the amount of carbon dioxide you expel (breathe out). Factors for your lifestyle and exercise pattern will be considered along with your resting calorie needs to determine the best approach to your nutrition care.

Your appointment is at _____.

The following suggestions are recommended to optimize the results of the measurement. Your dietetics professional will advise you if these instructions need to be altered based upon your individual situation:

- Do not eat or drink anything (except water) after midnight prior to the measurement. If your measurement is not scheduled in the morning, do not eat or drink anything (except water) for at least five (5) hours before your measurement.
- Do not exercise 24 hours prior to your scheduled RMR appointment time.
- Do not smoke or use nicotine (e.g., gum, patches) for at least two (2) hours before your appointment.
- Continue taking your medications as prescribed by your physician, advising your dietetics professional of each medication and any herbs, vitamins, minerals, or other supplements that you are taking.
- Plan to sit quietly for approximately 20 minutes prior to the measurement.
- One measurement is typically taken, although a second measurement may be needed.
- Depending on the equipment used, you may experience slight discomfort during the measurement (for example, if a nose clip is used, this closes both nostrils and requires that you breathe in and out through your mouth). Further information about the equipment being used will be described by your dietetics professional.
- Once your measurement is complete, your dietitian will interpret and may use the results as part of your nutrition care plan.