4. Kissing amps up your happy hormones
If you’re feeling stressed or rundown, a little kissing or lovemaking is actually the elixir you need to feel better. It will relax, restore and revitalize you… The feel-good chemicals in the brain get percolating: serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin — things you can get from the rush of exercising.

5. Kissing burns (a few) calories
It can’t compare to 30 minutes on the elliptical, but a vigorous make out session can burn 8 to 16 calories per smooch. Kissing and lovemaking can be a vigorous exercise if you’re fully engaged.

6. Kissing boosts self-esteem
One German study found that men who got a nice juicy kiss from their wives before leaving for work made more money. If he leaves his home happy, he’s more productive at work because he’s not feeling emotionally distressed, so he’s going to make more money. Kissing has so much to do with your self-esteem and feeling loved and connected.

7. Kissing can give you a facelift (kind of)
Deep kissing can shape up the neck and jawline, which are often trouble spots for those concerned about looking older. Your mouth has a number of facial muscles. When those are engaged in kissing, you can tighten and tone them.

8. Kissing is a barometer for sexual compatibility
It can be an excellent way to check out a potential partner for sexual compatibility before getting naked and emotionally involved. Sometimes during the first kiss, people are feeling awkward nervous or embarrassed. That might not breed the most seductive, sexy experience. Second kiss is cruddy, too? That’s your cue to take your lips - and rest of you - elsewhere.

Source: Upwave.com
10 Reasons to Give Up Diet Soda

Bubble Trouble
When taken at face value, diet soda seems like a health-conscious choice. It saves you the 140-plus calories you'd find in a sugary soft drink while still satisfying your urge for something sweet with artificial sweeteners like aspartame, saccharin, and sucralose. But there's more to this chemical cocktail than meets the eye.

It confuses your body
Artificial sweeteners have more intense flavor than real sugar, so over time products like diet soda dull our senses to naturally sweet foods like fruit. Even more troubling, these sugar stand-ins have been shown to have the same effect on your body as sugar.

It could lead to weight gain, not weight loss
Diet soda is calorie-free, but it won't necessarily help you lose weight. Researchers from the University of Texas found that over the course of about a decade, diet soda drinkers had a 70% greater increase in waist circumference compared with non-drinkers. And get this: participants who slurped down two or more sodas a day experienced a 500% greater increase. The way artificial sweeteners confuse the body may play a part, but another reason might be psychological.

It's associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes
Drinking one diet soda a day was associated with a 36% increased risk of metabolic syndrome and diabetes in a University of Minnesota study. Metabolic syndrome describes a cluster of conditions (including high blood pressure, elevated glucose levels, raised cholesterol, and large waist circumference) that put people at high risk for heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

It has no nutritional value
When you drink diet soda, you're not taking in any calories—but you're also not swallowing anything that does your body any good, either. The best no-calorie beverage is plain old water. Water is essential for many of our bodily processes, so replacing it with diet soda is a negative thing. If it's the fizziness you crave, try sparkling water.

Its sweetener is linked to headaches
Early studies on aspartame and anecdotal evidence suggest that this artificial sweetener may trigger headaches in some people.

It'll ruin your smile over time
Excessive soda drinking could leave you looking like a Breaking Bad extra, according to a case study published in the journal General Dentistry. The research compared the mouths of a cocaine-user, a methamphetamine-user, and a habitual diet-soda drinker, and found the same level of tooth erosion in each of them. The culprit here is citric acid, which weakens and destroys tooth enamel over time.

continued
10 Reasons to Give Up Diet Soda (cont.)

It makes drinking more dangerous
Using diet soda as a low-calorie cocktail mixer has the dangerous effect of getting you drunk faster than sugar-sweetened beverages, according to research from Northern Kentucky University. The study revealed that participants who consumed cocktails mixed with diet drinks had a higher alcohol concentration than those who drank alcohol blended with sugared beverages. The researchers believe this is because our bloodstream is able to absorb artificial sweetener more quickly than sugar.

It's associated with depression
A recent study presented at the American Academy of Neurology meeting found that over the course of 10 years, people who drank more than four cups or cans of soda a day were 30% more likely to develop depression than those who steered clear of sugary drinks. The correlation held true for both regular and diet drinks, but researchers were sure to note that the risk appeared to be greater for those who primarily drank diet sodas and fruit punches. Although this type of study can't prove cause and effect, its findings are worth considering.

It may be bad for your bones
Women over 60 are already at a greater risk for osteoporosis than men, and Tufts University researchers found that drinking soda, including diet soda, compounds the problem. They discovered that female cola drinkers had nearly 4% lower bone mineral density in their hips than women who didn't drink soda. The research even controlled for the participants' calcium and vitamin D intake. Additionally, a 2006 study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that cola intake (all kinds, not just diet) was associated with low bone-mineral density in women.

It may hurt your heart
Just one diet soft drink a day could boost your risk of having a vascular event such as stroke, heart attack, or vascular death, according to researchers from the University of Miami and Columbia University. Their study found that diet soda devotees were 43% more likely to have experienced a vascular event than those who drank none. Regular soda drinkers did not appear to have an increased risk of vascular events. Researchers say more studies need to be conducted before definitive conclusions can be made about diet soda's effects on health.

Source: health.com
9 Foods That Boost Metabolism Naturally

Your Metabolism is partly ruled by genetics, but you can rev it up naturally by eating right. Fill up on the following nine foods to increase your body’s fat-burning power.

**Egg whites** are rich in branched-chain amino acids, which keep your metabolism. Lean meat is full of iron; deficiencies in the mineral can slow metabolism. Eat three to four daily servings of iron-rich foods, such as chicken or fortified cereal.

**Water** - If you’re even mildly dehydrated, your metabolism may slow down. Tip: rink water cold, which forces your body to use more calories to warm up.

**Chili peppers** contain capsaicin, a chemical compound that can kick metabolism into higher gear. He suggests adding a tablespoon of chopped chili peppers to a meal once a day. Chili peppers are also an unexpected source of vitamin C.

**Coffee** - A study published in Physiology and Behavior found that the average metabolism rate of people who drank caffeinated coffee were 16 percent higher than that of those who drank decaf.

**Green Tea** contains a plant compound called EGCG, which promotes fat-burning, research suggests.

**Milk** - Studies suggest that consuming calcium may help your body metabolize fat more efficiently.

**Whole Grain** helps your body burn more fat because they take extra effort to break down than processed grains, like white bread and pasta. Whole foods that are rich in fiber, like brown rice and oatmeal, are best bets.

**Lentils** - About 20 percent of women are iron deficient, which are bad news for your waistline – your body can’t work as efficiently to burn calories when it’s missing what it needs to work properly. One cup of lentils provides 35 percent of your daily iron needs.

*Source: health.com*