

The Wellness News

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How to Boost Your Energy Level

Do you find yourself feeling tired and sluggish first thing in the morning, in the late afternoon, or after a typical day of work? Lack of energy is a frequent health complaint among Americans. Many individuals try to combat fatigue to improve their general wellbeing. You may be surprised to learn that increasing your energy level can be very simple!

1. Get adequate restful sleep:

Individual needs will vary, but 7-8 hours a night is a good goal. Getting sufficient sleep can help you feel more rested and better able to concentrate throughout the day. Our bodies enjoy routine, so by maintaining a regular sleep schedule you may wake up more easily in the mornings and get to sleep more efficiently at night.

2. Stay well hydrated:

The human body is composed mostly of water, thus you need to consume enough water to function at your best. Needs differ by individual, but aiming for the standard 8 glasses a day is a reasonable goal for almost anyone. If you workout regularly or at an intense level, you may need to consume more water.

3. Engage in regular moderate intensity exercise:

While it may seem like exercise will make you more tired, exercising can actually wake you up and give you a boost of energy that lasts all day. Even 30 minutes of exercise in your day can allow you to reap great benefits. Swimming, cycling, aerobic dancing, jogging, and walking are great options for physical activity. Whether it's included in a traditional exercise program or part of your regular daily activities, working up a sweat can improve your energy throughout the day.

4. Consume high fiber foods such as whole grains, beans, fruits and vegetables:

Complex carbohydrates like those found in whole grains take longer for your body to digest and can be a great way to maintain steady energy levels all day. Some examples of whole grains are oatmeal, whole wheat bread, couscous, barley, brown rice, and whole wheat pasta.

Energy drinks are not a solution to fatigue, but instead are meant to supply mental and physical stimulation for a short period of time. The health effects and the safety of these drinks are not well understood.

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5. Eat regularly and choose healthy snacks:

Eating meals infrequently can cause your blood sugar to spike and crash, leaving you tired and hungry. The better option is to eat smaller meals throughout the day so you can maintain your energy level and prevent fatigue and irritability. Instead of reaching for a sugary snack, choose fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy, lean protein or whole grains instead. They'll give you more long term energy instead of just a quick boost that fades.

6. Don't skip breakfast:

Breakfast truly is the most important meal of the day in terms of energy. Having a healthy, well-rounded meal after you wake up will help you stay awake and keep you energized for the rest of the day. A healthy breakfast includes high-fiber foods (fruit, vegetables, whole grains) and lean proteins (skim milk, low fat yogurt or cottage cheese, etc.)

7. Consume adequate protein:

Protein is an important part of a balanced diet and not eating enough can leave you feeling tired. The average, healthy person needs 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily. Use the following equation to determine your needs:

1. Divide your body weight (lbs) by 2.2 to get your weight in kilograms (kg)

2. Multiply this number by 0.8

Example: If you weigh 130lbs, your daily protein need is $130 \div 2.2 = 59 * 0.8 = 47$ grams

8. Limit caffeine intake:

Consuming caffeine on a regular basis can create a cycle that causes you to feel more lethargic long term. Caffeine can increase stress levels, cause energy levels to drop and obstruct your sleep (which negatively affects your energy levels the next day). Make sure to avoid caffeine in the afternoon and evening to prevent problems falling asleep at night. To cut back on caffeine, try drinking hot water with lemon or herbal teas.

9. Manage stress effectively:

Stress, anxiety and other negative emotions can cause you to feel drained and fatigued. How you're feeling mentally can influence your energy levels, so it's important to manage your emotions or get help if needed. Deep breathing or meditation can be an easy and effective way to recharge throughout the day. Try to take a few minutes each day to relax and let go of your stress.

Try These Energy Boosting Activities

1. Get up from your desk and take a 5 minute brisk walk around the office or outdoors if the weather permits.

2. Grab a healthy snack! Try half a whole grain bagel topped with peanut butter or a low-sugar fruit spread.

3. Take a break! Stop what you're doing and take several deep breaths (inhale slowly through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth) to rejuvenate your body and mind.



Call Your Health Coach for More Information 1-800-433-2320

Sources: Mayo Clinic, National Pain Foundation, National Institutes of Health