

BOOSTING ENERGY, BEATING STRESS

HOW TO FEEL LIKE A WINNER EVERY DAY



Do You Need to Change Your Diet?

The way you eat could be making you feel tired. Eating heavy meals and high-sugar snacks can cause energy dips that leave you feeling tired and sluggish. The key is to spread your calories out during the course of the day and evening, and focus on foods that will make your energy last, not spike it temporarily.

Menu Suggestions for a High Energy, Low Stress Day

- **Breakfast Boost:** Oatmeal with protein powder and nonfat milk; whole-wheat toast with almond butter; 100 percent fruit juice with no added sugar; berries or a banana
- **Mid-Morning Mellow:** Skim-milk mozzarella string cheese or low-fat cottage cheese; an orange or a pear
- **Power Lunch:** Sliced turkey, hardboiled egg or water-packed tuna; whole-wheat roll; tossed greens and cherry tomatoes with olive oil-based vinaigrette; grapes
- **Afternoon Pickup:** Nonfat yogurt with sliced apple; or bean dip with bell pepper and carrot sticks; green or black tea
- **Wind-Down Dinner:** Vegetables stir-fried with olive oil and chicken or tofu strips; brown rice or cracked wheat pilaf; fruit salad
- **Sleepy-Time Bites:** Nonfat milk or yogurt and whole-grain cereal



More Tips for Boosting Energy and Beating Stress

Stretch time. Take a few minutes to prioritize and plan. **Try this:** List your tasks in order of importance and timeliness. Separate them into three lists and plan accordingly:

Must Do Now	Must Do Soon	Must Do

Make the most of your commute. Tips: Play soothing music; Take a deep breath, exhale slowly (repeat 5 times) ... listen to a book on audio that you have wanted to read ... for safety's sake, save cell phone calls for when you're not driving.

Change your mind-set. Stress is your body's response to a situation. Good stress is the type that moves you to energize and excel. Bad stress is the type that keeps you from relaxing and sleeping, and it can eventually contribute to illness. You can't eliminate stress; the trick is to put a positive spin on it. Tips: Write down the good that has happened today; avoid pessimistic people; look forward to a new challenge.

Maximize time off. Weekends, nights, holidays and vacation are for you. Commit to relaxing, recharging and focusing on what really counts toward a long, healthy and happy life.

Get to the core of chronic fatigue. If you experience tiredness that doesn't respond to lifestyle changes or that lasts for more than a couple of weeks, see your health care provider. Your exhaustion could be a sign of a medical condition that needs treatment.

Final thought: Healthy habits such as diet, exercise and good sleep keep your body functioning at optimal levels. The rest is usually a case of mind over matter.

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THE ENERGY-STRESS CONNECTION

Stress and personal energy are closely related. The more energy you have, the more equipped you are to handle stress. The better you handle stress, the more energy you have to take on new challenges, which makes it easier for you to cope with new stress ...



Just thinking about that endless cycle might make you feel tired.

Fear not — the solution is simpler than you think. One key to feeling more energetic and less stressed-out is to make yourself a priority. Take time to focus on your own needs and well-being on a regular basis. You'll find that spending some time and energy on yourself means that you have more to give back to your work, family and life.

Stress-Busting Essentials

Sleep soundly. You can cope better with stress when you're rested.

Talk about what's bothering you. Your family, friends, co-workers or a counselor can help just by listening.

Relax at least once a day. Try to reserve at least 15-20 minutes to put your feet up, listen to music or daydream.

Exercise regularly. It helps release the physical tension caused by stress.

Snicker, giggle, laugh out loud. You'll feel better and improve your perspective.

Set limits on extra demands. Learn to say "no" to the nonessential.



Start the Day Off Right

What you do when you first wake up can affect your energy and performance all day. **Set yourself up for a productive day:**

- **Fuel up.** In one study, British researchers found that people who ate nothing in the morning did poorly on memory tests and had high levels of fatigue just four hours after waking. **Smart start:** whole-grain cereal with fruit and nonfat milk.
- **Get moving.** Morning exercise has many benefits from improved sleep at night to less stress and more energy throughout the day. **Smart start:** A brisk walk and some stretches — just 15-30 minutes.
- **Streamline your routine.** If your morning is hectic, it can affect your mood for the day. Simplify your morning by doing all you can to prepare the night before. **Smart start:** Pack lunch and prepare your clothes for the next day, organize your briefcase or gas up the car.

Find Time to Ease Stress

Step 1: Try to cut back, by just 10 percent, the time you spend on daily activities you have to do such as taking a shower, getting dressed or going to the store.

Step 2: Instead of eliminating other routines, such as watching TV or reading the newspaper, simply shave the time you spend doing them.

Step 3: Once you're in the habit of trimming time, you'll begin to feel less rushed, more satisfied and less stressed-out.

Step 4: Use the time you've "made" for pastimes that can further energize you. **Examples:** a new hobby, playing with the kids, a half-hour workout or a 20-minute nap.

Did You Know?

Some medications can make you feel lethargic or unfocused. Discuss your medications with a health care provider or pharmacist to identify any that could be causing you problems. Don't forget to mention any herbs, vitamins or other supplements you take.

Give Your Brain a Boost

Keeping your mind sharp and active can help you feel more motivated and energetic, and may also alleviate some age-related memory loss. **Ideas:** Work a word puzzle ... read more ... take a cooking or dance class ... play board games ... join a book group.

Keep Your Energy Up

Eat right. Foods that contain magnesium, zinc, iron, B vitamins, and the antioxidants beta-carotene and vitamins A and E boost energy. **For quick lifts:** Eat smaller meals, and snack on fast-fuel carbohydrates such as raisins, low-fat granola or fig bars, or a banana. Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily to help fight thirst and dehydration, which can also make you feel tired.

Sleep tight. Wake up and go to bed at the same times each day to help your biological clock run smoothly. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep daily.

Exercise well ahead of bedtime (at least 3 hours before), and resist caffeine and alcohol, which can disturb sleep. **Before bedtime tips:** Take a warm bath, listen to soothing music, read or engage in another relaxing activity.

Stay physically active. Exercise strengthens your heart, lungs and muscles to help you do more physically. But it also increases the supply of oxygen to your brain, boosting alertness so you can perform mental tasks faster and better.

Have fun. Numerous studies suggest friendships boost your health and happiness. People with close relationships live longer and handle personal setbacks better. You can also try a new hobby. Hobbies replace bad stress with good stress, the kind that makes you strive to succeed by learning a new skill or reaching a goal.

