

## What Could Be Making You Tired?

**Medications:** Certain ones may cause drowsiness or fatigue, including some antihistamines for allergies, blood pressure medications, sleeping pills, steroids and diuretics. Talk to your health care provider about nondrowsy alternatives.

**Eating heavy meals:** Large meals, especially those high in fat, can bring on lethargy. For sustained energy, eat smaller meals and snack on energy- and nutrition-packed foods throughout the day. Don't skip breakfast.

**Chronic fatigue syndrome:** This condition starts with flu-like symptoms and lasts for six months or longer. Other possible causes of fatigue are eliminated before this diagnosis is made.

**Depression:** Trouble sleeping or too much sleeping can be a symptom of depression. It's natural to feel down for short periods, but true clinical depression interferes with everyday life for an extended time. Talk to your health care provider if emotions are keeping you down.

**Sleep apnea:** This is when breathing stops temporarily and repeatedly during sleep. It's often accompanied by loud snoring. People with sleep apnea frequently feel physical and mental fatigue, irritability and headaches. **Self-care starters for sleep apnea:** Lose excess weight, avoid alcohol and tranquilizers, and don't sleep on your back. If you smoke, talk to your health care provider about quitting.

**Insomnia:** If you have insomnia, you are unable to sleep well enough to function normally. The most common causes involve psychological issues such as stress, worry or depression, or a medical condition that causes discomfort. **Self-care starters for insomnia:** Try to uncover the "why" through a sleep journal. Note times you wake up and go to bed, the amount of time you sleep, bedtime activities and all other related factors.

**The bottom line:** If you're experiencing tiredness that doesn't respond to lifestyle changes or that lasts more than a couple of weeks, see your health care provider. You could have a condition that needs treatment.



## Boost Energy, Beat Stress

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.

Burning the candle at both ends is a common problem in today's fast-paced world. You've got a lot to fit in every day. But stretching yourself too thin can make fatigue a real problem — and it may cause health problems down the road. Take steps now to manage stress and recapture your energy.

### 10 SIMPLE STRESS BUSTERS

1. Get 7-8 hours of **sleep** daily.
2. **Exercise** or otherwise stay physically active most days of the week.
3. **Laugh** and have fun.
4. Take up a **hobby**.
5. Take a deep **breath** in and exhale slowly. Repeat 5 times.
6. Take 3 minutes for gentle **stretching** periodically throughout the day.
7. **Meditate** or otherwise take time out.
8. **Read** or take time for another activity you especially enjoy.
9. Spend 10 minutes **visualizing** yourself on a beach, in a green field or in another calming place.
10. **Talk** about what's bothering you. Your family, friends, co-workers or a counselor can help just by listening.



**Final thought:** Everyone feels run down once in a while. Stressful life events and worries can make anyone feel low on energy. During these times, remember to take extra good care of yourself, and your energy level will get back on track.

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# ENERGIZE!

BEATING FATIGUE AND  
FEELING YOUR BEST

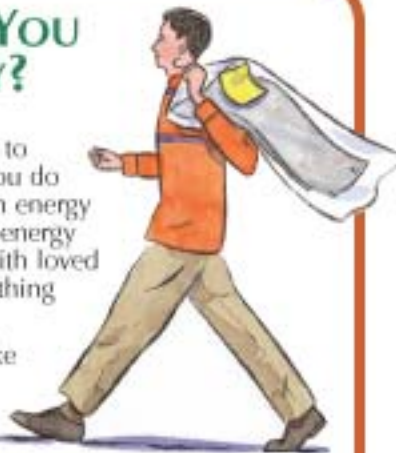


## How Do You Feel Today?

Did you wake up refreshed and ready to start the day? Did you do your daily tasks with energy and still have some energy left over to spend with loved ones or doing something for yourself?

This might sound like wishful thinking. The truth is that many people feel tired much of the time. Why? Often it's a lifestyle issue. Sometimes it's a medical issue. **The solution:** Instead of thinking of tiredness as natural, think of it as something you can fix and a sign you should not ignore.

This brochure offers some healthy suggestions that could give you the energy boost you need.



## 3 Steps to Feeling Your Best

- 1 Get enough sleep.
- 2 Exercise regularly.
- 3 Eat a healthy diet.



### Did You Know?

Mild dehydration can make you feel tired and headachy. Drink 6-8 large glasses of water every day — more if you're exercising or working outdoors in hot weather. And those energy drinks? They can be heavy on caffeine and sugar and are generally not good for quenching thirst. If you're playing sports or engaging in other physical activities, water is usually the best choice.

## STEP 1 GET ENOUGH SLEEP

Missing a few hours of sleep or sleeping so lightly that your body misses out on the deep, restorative sleep it needs can leave you just as tired as pulling an all-nighter. The National Sleep Foundation reports that most adults need 7-8 hours of sleep daily. While that need can vary a little from person to person, getting enough quality sleep is very important for your health and safety.

**A good measure of sleep quality:** If you often feel drowsy during the day, you can't sit still without nodding off, or you fall asleep within 5 minutes of lying down, you're probably not getting enough sleep.

### GOOD SLEEP TIPS

**Establish a sleep schedule.** Go to sleep and wake up at about the same times, even on days off.

**Calming activities are best.** A low-key bedtime routine can help you ease into sleep more restfully. Take a warm bath, listen to soothing music or try another relaxing activity.

Avoid activities that get you charged up, such as paying bills, watching exciting television or trying to solve difficult problems.

**Prime the environment.** Keep your room cool, quiet and dark. A fan, a humidifier, earplugs, eyeshades or a black-out curtain can help.

**Skip the sleep fighters.** Avoid alcohol, nicotine and caffeine. Alcohol may help you fall asleep, but it usually disrupts your sleep later on. The stimulants nicotine and caffeine are best avoided within 6-8 hours before bedtime. And quitting smoking is one of the best steps you can take for your health.

**Also:** Avoid a heavy meal, drink very little liquid close to bedtime and finish exercising within 3-4 hours before retiring.

**Still can't sleep?** Get up and read, watch a low-key television show or listen to soothing music until you feel sleepy. Get professional help for continued sleep problems.



**Instant Energy Boost** Get some fresh air if you're inside all day — a quick hike around the block can increase oxygen flow to your brain and improve your attitude.

## STEP 2 EXERCISE REGULARLY

It's typical to feel a little tired after a good exercise session or a physically active day (working in the yard, for example). But regular exercise and physical activity actually boost your energy when you need it most.

Most people who add exercise to their daily routine report feeling more vibrant, energized and alert — and they sleep better. Perking up may be as simple as adding a brisk half-hour walk to your day. Target 30-60 minutes of physical activity most days to help you stay energized and alert.



## STEP 3 EAT A HEALTHY DIET

One sure way to feel your best is to eat a balanced diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, lean protein and complex carbohydrates — and low in saturated fat and added sugar. Eating lots of sugar or refined carbohydrates (common in processed foods) can contribute to fatigue. **Food fact:** A sugary snack in the afternoon can give you temporary energy but may add to your fatigue when the sugar high wears off.

### Healthy, Energizing Snack Ideas

If you need a midafternoon or midmorning pick-me-up, these snacks can help:

- One slice of whole-wheat bread topped with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
- A hard-boiled egg and carrot sticks
- A quarter-cup of dried fruit with low-fat yogurt
- Low-fat cheese with whole-wheat crackers
- A dozen almonds
- Six ounces of vegetable juice