

## Improving Your Energy Levels

Sometimes it seems that even the simplest everyday tasks are hard to accomplish, even after we get a decent night's sleep. Our busy lives leave little time to stop and recharge our batteries, so sometimes it can feel as though we're operating on a chronic energy deficit. However, there are ways of gaining that energy back. It all starts with recognizing the little places where it is likely to leak away. Here we provide some tips on how to improve energy levels.



**Do not skip meals** – Studies published in the journal *Nutritional Health* found that those who skipped any meal during the day had greater feelings of fatigue overall than those who ate regular meals. Breakfast is particularly important, as it jump-starts your system to prepare you for the day. Just avoid eating sugary breakfast foods, as it will only lead to an energy crash mid-morning. Eggs, oatmeal and smoothies are all good choices to provide you with energy that will last throughout the morning.

**Drink more water** – A lack of sufficient water can leave you feeling sluggish, even if you are only slightly dehydrated. A study published in *the Journal of Nutrition* found that women who were only 1% dehydrated reported feeling fatigued and depressed, in comparison with the participants who were optimally hydrated. You don't need to drink 8 glasses a day, but if you find yourself feeling tired, drink a glass of water and it may boost your energy.

**Get more magnesium** – This mineral is responsible for over 300 of the body's biochemical functions, including creating energy from the breakdown of glucose. According to the USDA, almost 60% of the American population is deficient in magnesium. When levels are even just a little low, your energy can drop. Increase your intake of magnesium-rich foods such as nuts, seeds, whole grains and dark chocolate.

**Get some exercise** – Contrary to what you may think, exercise actually increases energy levels. Walking is particularly good for giving you more get-up-and-go. The results of a California State experiment found that subjects taking a brisk, 10-minute walk reported increased energy levels for the following two hours.

**Reduce stress** – Of course this is easier said than done, but there are stress reduction techniques you can learn to lower levels of energy-zapping stress in your life. Yoga, deep

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breathing and meditation are good ways to handle stress. Slow, deep breathing through the abdomen has been practiced by eastern cultures for centuries as a way of increasing energy. Even things as simple as listening to music or reading a book can help you to relax.

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