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Fill Up Your Energy Tank



Are there days when your "gas tank" is so low that you're sleepy by lunchtime and craving a power nap by mid-afternoon? Ever wonder what's making you so tired all the time? Most of the time, fatigue can be traced to one or more of your daily habits or routines. More than likely, you already know what's causing your fatigue; you're just not doing enough about it. Let's take a closer look at some of the most powerful changes you can make today to fight fatigue.

Find a Rest Stop: Try going to bed a little sooner than usual. Start slowly at first; if you usually don't crash until 11:00 at night, don't shift to a 9:00 bedtime starting tonight or you may end up wide awake at 4:00 tomorrow morning. Also avoid drinking caffeine late at night, since it is a stimulant and will prevent restful sleep. And avoid carbohydrates a few hours before bedtime, to prevent spikes in your insulin and cortisol levels. Finally, develop a relaxing routine that prepares you to fall asleep - and stay asleep.

Rev Your Engine: Exercise is a fantastic way to combat fatigue and increase energy while becoming healthy. The key is to not exercise so much that you end up sending your body into a state of overtraining and more fatigue. More is not better with exercise; better is better. It is recommended that you exercise 20-45 minutes three to four days per week. You must allow sufficient time for your body to recover from intensive workouts, so adequate rest is crucial if you want to achieve optimal results.

Fuel Up: Eating frequently helps to maintain normal blood sugar levels, preventing energy crashes during the day. If you wait too long between feedings, your insulin levels spike, causing your body to go on a hormonal roller-coaster ride. You will feel surges of energy followed by sudden crashes with tiredness, fatigue and lethargy.

You also may want to review a few smaller lifestyle issues to see if they are contributing to your fatigue. For example, if you are taking medications, fatigue could be a side effect. If so, ask your

doctor if there is an alternative medication (or better yet, a nutritional supplement, herb or even a lifestyle modification) that would be just as helpful. For example, many people take diabetes medication, but diet and exercise are powerful ways to keep diabetes under control - in most cases without requiring medication.

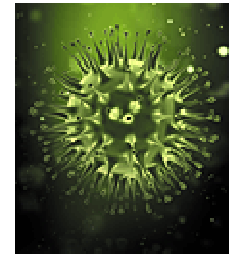
Also consider the amount of time you are taking for yourself each day. Do you have any "me" time at all? A life of serving and worrying about others without caring for your own needs is extremely draining. Constant stress can also wear you down. This is a common problem for anyone who feels overwhelmed caring for their family, work, friends, and handling all their other responsibilities.

Life today can feel overwhelming, so much so that you may see no end in sight. However, by implementing some simple techniques, you can gain control over your body and mind, and ultimately your fatigue. Talk to your doctor for more information.

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Flu Prevention: Think Vitamin D

Every year the medical profession and government authorities encourage citizens in many developed countries to get immunized against the current form of influenza virus. This year is no different, particularly with the "dreaded" swine flu still on everyone's minds. While the decision to get vaccinated is an individual one with both pros and cons, consider that a natural approach, namely supplementation with specific nutrients such as vitamin D, can boost immune function and may play an important role in the prevention of respiratory tract infections.



In recent years, studies have shown that vitamin D is an important modulator of immune function. Some authorities suggest it has the potential to reduce the risk of life-threatening influenzas based on the initial observation that influenza normally strikes in countries during the colder (winter) months, when vitamin D production in the skin declines. This happens because the most generally available source of vitamin D is sunlight. Reduction in skin production of vitamin D due to reduced or no exposure to daily sunlight is accompanied by a decline in blood levels of vitamin D.

Some vitamin D experts suggest adults should supplement with 2,000 IU vitamin D per day (especially during the winter) as a means to maintain more optimal vitamin D status in general, strengthen immune function and help reduce the risk of influenza and its invasion into the lung cavity.

Anyone who's suffered through the flu knows that it's not only potentially dangerous; it can be downright miserable. Ask your doctor to assess your current vitamin D status and discuss the value of vitamin D supplementation, particularly during the flu season. Whatever your strategy, it won't eliminate your risk altogether, but why not do everything you can do naturally to protect yourself and your loved ones?

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Sit Less, Live Longer



You may find the following information so profound that you feel inclined to sit down for a minute, but that's actually the opposite of what you should do. A study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* suggests people who spend more time sitting (specifically, more than six hours a day) during leisure time have an increased risk of premature death compared to those who sit for three hours or less, and the results are independent of exercise

When you sit for prolonged periods of time, usually with [little or no movement](#), it negatively affects circulation, metabolism, resting blood pressure and cholesterol, among other things. And more time sitting, especially in front of the TV, computer, etc., often contributes to excessive snacking -all too often the unhealthy variety - which can lead to obesity and weight-related disorders such as diabetes.

"[Sit less, move more](#)" is a great message to store in your memory bank and recall on a daily basis. Anytime you start to feel stuck to your chair, peel yourself away and add a little motion (and a few years) to your life. Talk to your doctor about the health dangers associated with prolonged sitting (especially its impact on the spine and posture) and how you can sit less and live longer.

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