

Hope & Healing

Fatigue Hints for Overcoming Fatigue

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

Introduction _____

Everyone gets tired and who wouldn't like to have more energy than they now have? The broad prescription you've heard in the past: get plenty of rest, eat a balanced diet, and exercise, are just that, broad. Authorities on fatigue and energy go beyond these guidelines and offer specific high-power suggestions that cover resting, eating, exercise, and how to better organize your day for maximum effectiveness. First, however, be sure that tired doesn't mean sick.

Rule Out the Big Stuff _____

Fatigue is a symptom of something else. It isn't a disease within itself. The something else may be a cold or a flu attack that is coming on, or it can be a warning of serious illness: diabetes, thyroid problems, heart disease, anemia, hepatitis, mononucleosis, cancer. So, if tiredness persists, don't try to diagnose yourself. See your doctor for help. Tiredness may also mean that you're poorly organized.

- **Plan ahead.** Take time at the end of one week to plan for the next. Set definite short and long term goals.
- **Start the day right.** Know where you're going each day. Take time at the completion of each day to plan tomorrow's activities, listing each task you wish to complete or to start or to move along.
- **Warm up.** Don't start the day off feeling rushed and tired. Give yourself an extra 15 minutes and review your to-do list before you

begin.

- **Eat a three-piece breakfast.** Your body has been without fuel for many hours. Start your day with cereal (a complex carbohydrate) and milk (a source of protein), or wheat toast and an egg or low-fat yogurt and cottage cheese or a piece of fish or chicken, to get protein, carbohydrate and enough fat.
- **Cut the sugar.** Avoid ultra-high carbohydrate breakfasts that are frosted with lots of sugar. These can drive your insulin up and drop your blood sugar, causing tiredness and leaving you jittery. Say goodbye to the doughnut shop on your way to the office.
- **Stop energy robbers.** A problem on the job, a family fuss, whatever is unresolved in your life demands attention and efforts to get it under control.
- **Work out and rev up.** Exercise is actually the only way to increase personal energy. Energy requires energy bonds and energy bonds are present in large muscles and large muscles can only get larger if used, as in exercise. Study after study confirms that regular exercise at a moderate level makes people feel better, helps them sleep, and relieves stress. Brisk walking three to five times a week, for 20 to 30 minutes each time, is a good move toward better energy. But, don't exercise within 2 hours of bedtime
- **Build activity into your day.** Whether you work out early, at lunchtime, or in the evening, don't

save it all for one time. Get up and move around at least every couple of hours during the day. Or, ride a stationary bike in the privacy of your office, run stairs, or do isometrics sitting at your desk or in your car.

- **Use colors.** Living in dark houses causes feelings of fatigue. Studies have shown that lots of color and lots of variety keep energy rates high.
- **Music therapy.** Music may be the thing that lights your fire. Search for a tune or two to pep you up.
- **Splashing.** Cold water invigorates through either splashing your face or in a shower. Cascading water seems to make some persons happier and more energetic.
- **Drinking up.** Watch the booze and pour in the water, especially the day before and the day of physical activity.
- **Rethink medicines.** Many medicines cause tiredness, both prescription and over the counter: sleeping pills, tranquilizers, antidepressants, medicines for high blood pressure, antihistamines. However, never, ever discontinue a prescription medicine for the heart or

high blood pressure without consulting your doctor.

- **New things.** Living in a rut tends to make us tired. Vary your day, read something inspirational, not the newspaper. Turn off the news, it tends toward the bad side. We become prisoners of our culture and our habits; break out of your rut
- **Curb caffeine.** Your morning coffee can kick you into gear, but drinking it throughout the day actually backfires. It makes you feel as though you have energy but the boost is false.
- **Divert resentment.** Resentment toward another person is emotionally draining as well as physically crippling. Forgiveness is the best move. Until you forgive, redirect resentment as energy to exercise workouts or to your job.
- **Write it out.** Honesty is the best policy. Write out what is bothering you on one side of a sheet of paper. Write out possible solutions on the other side. Increasing your options gives you power over energy robbing problems.
- **Small steps.** Break projects into bite-size portions. Large projects often overwhelm until broken into the small steps required to bring success.
- **Say no.** If your plate is already full, refuse to place someone else's portion on it.
- **Learn to delegate.** Letting others help you to complete a project is an often underused strategy to take the pressure off.
- **Blow out the candle.** If you're burning the candle at both ends — getting to bed after the late show and getting up with The Morning Show, for example — you can't help feeling burned out. Don't short-change your sleep. Blow out the candle!

- **Get enough sleep, not too much.** If your fatigue makes you oversleep, you'll tend to be groggy all day. 6 to 8 hours is usually enough for most people.
- **Get 20 winks.** We hit normal energy slumps at predictable times, 11:00 a.m. and 2:00-3:00 p.m. daily. Short naps of from 5-30 minutes can be invigorating if taken during these times. So anticipate downtimes and change your schedule to allow for a nap.
- **Shed pounds.** Carrying 20% extra body weight takes energy. Lose your excess weight gradually through sensible exercise and a low fat diet.
- **Eat light for lunch.** Heavy lunches can cause sleepiness. If you can't be satisfied with soup, salad, and fruit, plan for a 20-minute walk after lunch.
- **Turn off and tune in.** Television lulls us into lethargy. Turn the set off. Do a workout. Or, read a book. This can actually be more energizing.
- **Being of the right mind.** As the mind goes, so goes the body. Here are 3 proven ways to gain a new attitude:
 - Think positive.
 - Be inspired, passionate about something.
 - Be confident.

Summary _____

Chances are that you have found new ways to become energetic. Now that you feel that you can do it, you will have the energy to do it. And once you've proven to yourself that you've got the energy, you will become even more confident.

Awaken the Miracles Within You

The Miracle of Developing a Close Family

A prominent psychiatrist was once asked for advice about growing closer as a family. He said, "Laugh fifteen times each day."

Here are four ways to stimulate your funny bone:

1. Instill a love for reading by reading good books aloud. Get lost in a good book together.
2. Help your children appreciate art by developing "hands on" art experiences.
3. Celebrate creativity by putting on family plays.
4. Play music together. When you play together you'll be in harmony

The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.