



# 12 Tips to Increase Your Energy & Mood

All of us could use more energy. The tips below can help you improve your personal energy and mood to help you get the most out of each day. Choose the tips that appeal most to you to get started. When you feel your new habit is firmly established, look to make other positive lifestyle changes to further enhance your vitality and mood.

## **Tip# 1 - Take a brisk walk**

A survey of more than 300 Californians ranked exercised as the best way to lift a bad mood. According to renowned mood expert Robert Thayer, Ph.D., a bad mood has two major components, feelings of tension and low energy. Exercise can boost your mood by relieving tension, raising energy and increasing optimism. If you're dragging or in a bad mood, take a brisk walk. In experiments conducted by Dr. Thayer, a brisk 10-minute walk not only increased energy and mood, but positive effects lasted for up to two hours. And when daily 10-minute walks continued for three weeks, overall energy levels and mood were lifted.

## **Tip# 2 - Don't skip breakfast...or any meal**

Start your day with a nutritious breakfast. Studies show that people who eat breakfast report being in a better mood and have more energy throughout the day. Other benefits include improved metabolism and better concentration and performance. Additionally, studies published in the journal Nutritional Health found that missing any meal during the day led to an overall greater feeling of fatigue by the day's end.

## **Tip# 3 - Identify the biggest source of stress in your life and face it head on**

Too much stress drains your energy, undermines your mood and negatively impacts your health. If you're suffering from overwhelming or chronic stress ask yourself: What is the biggest problem or conflict that is troubling me and how can I deal with it more effectively? Face the issue head on by devising ways to change or manage the aspects of the issues over which you can control. Learn how to let go of those aspects over which you have no control.

## **Tip# 4 - Commit to getting adequate, quality sleep each day**

Many people drag through each day because of nothing more complicated than a chronic sleep deficit. According to a survey by the National Sleep Foundation, those who got fewer than six hours of sleep on weekdays were more likely to describe themselves as stressed, sad, angry, and pessimistic. Conversely, those getting adequate sleep reported more positive feelings. For better energy and mood, make the quality and quantity of your sleep a priority. Commit to getting seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

## **Tip# 5 - Adjust your diet**

What you eat and when you eat affects your energy and mood. Choose one or more of the following tips to help keep your energy and stable throughout the day:



- Eat small meals and snacks every few hours. Eating consistently throughout the day provides the brain with a constant source of fuel.
- Limit your consumption of simple sugars (soda, candy, fruit juice) and refined carbohydrates (white bread, crackers, breakfast cereals, white rice). These can create radical spikes and resulting drops in your blood sugar levels and leave you feeling tired and irritable.
- Eat more whole grains and complex carbohydrates. These take longer than refined carbohydrates to digest, preventing fluctuations in blood sugar and drops in energy and mood.
- Limit your caffeine intake. A cup or two of coffee in the morning may help you get going, but try not to consume caffeine once you get into early afternoon. Too much caffeine is linked to fatigue and mood swings.

### **Tip# 6 - Listen to music**

Numerous studies report that listening to music is a proven mood lifter. According to Thayer, music is the second only to exercise in raising energy and lifting mood. Music activates the part of your brain that is hardwired for pleasure and has a powerful influence over your state of mind. Any music you like works, and the positive effects can last long after the music is over.

### **Tip# 7 - Lose extra pounds**

Even small reductions in your percentage of body fat can improve your energy and mood, according to John Hopkins researcher, Kerry Stewart. When you lose weight, the body does not have to work as hard to maintain basic functions, freeing up that energy for other activities. To lose weight, most weight-loss experts recommend cutting back on portion sizes, eating balanced meals, and increasing physical activity.

### **Tip# 8 - Drink plenty of water**

Believe it or not, a common and often overlooked cause of fatigue is dehydration. Even slight dehydration can leave you feeling tired and lethargic, according to the most recent research. A recent Tufts University study found that mild dehydration (a loss of just 1 to 2 percent of body weight as water) was enough to impair thinking and have a negative effect on mood. A steady supply of water throughout the day will naturally keep things flowing - including your energy. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day and do not wait until you're thirsty to drink.

### **Tip# 9 - Give yourself a break**

Research indicates that for optimal performance you need to disengage every few hours - even if only for a few minutes. Instead of a coffee break, take an "energy" break. Energy breaks might include some of the suggestions mentioned above such as taking a brisk 10-minute walk, listening to music, or having a nutritious snack, or they might include: deep breathing, spending a few minutes in the sun, meditation stretching or yoga. The important thing is to take a break to restore your energy, focus and mood.

### **Tip# 10 - Get your body moving and feel better now**

If exercise is not a regular part of your life, here's a new perspective to consider. The benefits of exercise are immediate. After just 10 - minutes of exercise, your mood improves, you're less stressed and you have more energy. Don't overwhelm yourself with the thought that you have to exercise five



days a week for the next year to improve your energy and health. Instead, look at 20 – 30 minutes of exercise as a way of feeling better today.

### **Tip# 11 - Limit use of alcohol, nicotine or stimulants**

It may seem obvious that if you're abusing alcohol or tobacco you will suffer from increased tiredness and fatigue. However, be sure to avoid the bad habit of using alcohol to fall asleep at night. While alcohol may initially help you fall asleep, alcohol typically produces light, unsettled sleep that is less restorative. You won't get the rest you think you are, even if you sleep a full eight hours. By cutting down on alcohol before bedtime, you'll get a better night's rest and have more energy the next day. Smoking aggravates numerous conditions that contribute to fatigue. Additionally, when smokers sleep, they experience nicotine withdrawal, causing difficulties falling asleep and waking up during the night. For better energy and mood, the best move is to quit smoking.

### **Tip# 12 - Rule out health problems**

If your fatigue lasts for two weeks or more, see your doctor. Fatigue is a common symptom of many illnesses, including diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, anemia, thyroid disease and sleep apnea. Additionally, many medications can contribute to fatigue. List all of the medications you are taking - both prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs - and show the list to your doctor. If appropriate, your doctor may suggest some alternatives.