



Non Caffeine Ways To Increase Energy Without Burning Out

Feeling drained from holiday shopping and planning, and trying to balance work or studying, family and friends – while trying to make time for yourself?

While many of us will resort to something caffeinated to increase our energy, there are many other ways to help support energy – whether you need a quick boost or long-term energy management.

Regulate Cortisol

Adaptogenic herbs such as *Withania somnifera*, *Eleutherococcus senticosus*, *Rhodiola rosea* and *Shisandra chinensis* have been shown to reduce cortisol, and prevent us from having energy crashes throughout the day. Adaptogens regulate stress via modulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis⁽¹⁾. This in turn helps to increase our resilience to stress, improve mental and physical performance, reduce anxiety and can even improve depression - having a direct effect on our overall energy levels. Many of us nowadays “burn the candle” on both ends, leading to burnout and fatigue. Everyday stress causes the adrenal glands, which are small organs located above the kidneys, to produce more cortisol production. Physiologically, this increases feelings of overwhelm, mood swings, irritability and an after effect of fatigue and exhaustion. By regulating cortisol, adaptogens reduce feelings of anxiety and stress, leading to improved overall energy.

Nourish the nervous system

Incorporating nervous system tonics such as B vitamins, and Magnesium has been shown to increase overall energy⁽²⁾⁽³⁾. Magnesium is incorporated in a number of bodily reactions, one of them involving energy production in the mitochondria. B vitamins, especially B12, B6 and B9 nourish the nervous system by preserving neuron health and supporting neurotransmitter function in the brain. B vitamins, mainly B6, are also involved in energy production and metabolism. Overall, by supporting brain function and energy production, B vitamins and Magnesium have an effect on reducing fatigue.



Stabilize your blood sugar

Reactive hypoglycemia, or “blood sugar crashes”, is one of the top reasons why you might be feeling tired⁽²⁾. When consuming simple carbohydrates such as white flours, the high sugar content causes the pancreas to release large amounts of insulin, leading to hypoglycemia and low energy. Instead of reaching for something with refined sugar, snack on foods containing protein, complex carbohydrates and healthy fats.

Quick Daily Energy Boosts

- 1) Meditate – Meditation and deep breathing can help reduce stress and anxiety, which will then help us think more clearly and feel more energized.
- 2) Go for a walk or do yoga – Walking can increase cognitive performance, energy and reduce stress by improving circulation, especially to the brain. Our bodies require daily sunlight to regulate our circadian rhythm, which also affects our energy. By taking a 10-minute walk to recharge in sunlight, we can receive fresh air, experience the benefits of nature, and increase our overall energy and well being.
- 3) Get social – Social interaction is healthy and reduces feelings of depression and isolation. Avoid using technology as a means of communication – face-to-face interaction trumps technology any day.
- 4) Reduce eyestrain - Sitting at a desk and staring at a computer screen or paperwork causes eyestrain, which can make you feel tired as well. Try letting your eyes relax by looking off into the distance every 10 minutes, and take scheduled breaks from your computer.
- 5) Eat a snack containing protein and healthy fats – Great examples of this are nuts and nut butter with a complex carbohydrate such as an apple or a brown rice cake, or hummus with vegetables.

Fatigue is multifactorial and correlated with many conditions such as thyroid & hormonal imbalances, food sensitivities, and nutrient deficiencies. In order

to best evaluate your fatigue, it is important to get adequate testing in order to determine the root cause of this symptom.

Use your extended coverage this December before it runs out, and make an **individualized holiday wellness plan** for yourself with Kaitlyn. Call 519-821-1999 or email clinic@healingfoundations.ca.

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References:

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3. Cox IM, Campbell MJ, Dowson D. Red blood cell magnesium and chronic fatigue syndrome. *Lancet*. 1991;337(8744):757-60. Doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0140-6736\(91\)91371-Z](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0140-6736(91)91371-Z).

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