



Energy Boosters

Try Something New: Trying something new can be satisfying and exhilarating because novel experiences release the brain's "reward chemical," dopamine, which is also a motivator for doing more. (Gregory Berns, M.D.)

Get Up and Move: Physical activity improves circulation, which sends oxygen and nutrients to the brain and body. If you're studying, get up, stretch, and move around at least once every hour. Sitting up straight increases oxygen flow, too. Mom was right! (Jacob Teitelbaum, internist)

Breathe Deeply: Breathing deeply improves circulation and increases energy. According to Dr. Andrew Weil, "The general principles of correct breathing are to make it deeper, slower, quieter, and more regular."

Exercise: Exercising for 30 minutes three times a week, or walking on a regular basis, trains your body to make more efficient use of oxygen and glucose. In addition to an improved cardiovascular system, you'll feel more energetic. (Woodson Merrell, M.D.)

Grazing: Eating three small meals a day with snacks in between (watch fat and refined sugar) will help maintain a consistent blood-sugar level. If you crave something sweet, try dark chocolate "which increases energy by improving mood and attention span." (Molly Kimball, registered dietician and Jacob Teitelbaum, internist)

Do Something Fun: Music, comedy, whatever makes you feel good can increase the level of endorphins in your brain and oxygen to the heart. Conversely, people and things that make you feel sad can sap your energy. (Andrew Weil, M.D.)

Drink Plenty of Fluids: Water helps carry oxygen to your cells, so try to drink at least four glasses throughout the day. Coffee and tea are fine, in moderation; but try not to drink caffeinated beverages late in the day. (Andrew Weil, M.D.)

Obsess Less: Don't let worries push you over the edge. Worrying too much releases cortisol, a stress hormone, that can have a negative impact over time. Try yoga or a meditation technique to calm your mind. And remind yourself that your "worries" aren't "crises." (Woodson Merrell, M.D.)

Go Outside: Spending time outside can reduce stress hormones, lower blood pressure, and increase the production of serotonin, improving mood and increasing energy. So try to get out at least once a day. (Jacob Teitelbaum, internist)