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THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

If you are feeling sluggish and tired during the day, instead of reaching for a sugar hit, look at your daily lifestyle and make some positive changes in order to turn this around naturally. Some small daily changes can transform your energy and mood.

FITNESS TIP

To avoid any post-exercise slumps, try to eat a combination of carbohydrate and protein within 40 minutes of training. This will keep energy levels raised.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

YOU don't need to look far to see endless advertising for energy boosters in various forms including supplements, vitamins, herbs and, of course, sugar-rich energy drinks.

Thankfully, there are things you can do to enhance your energy levels, naturally. Here are some tips:

Drink water: If your body is lacking water, one of the first signs is that of fatigue. Make sure you keep drinking consistently, ideally around two litres per day.

Once it becomes a habit, you will feel much more focused and energised. With most of our bodies made up of water, as little as a 1% drop can affect your metabolism. Remember foods such as vegetables and fruit also contain plenty of water.

Think positively: In many cases tiredness is in the mind. If you think you are going to be tired, think in a positive way and that feeling can be reversed very quickly, eg it may be hard to jump out of bed at 5am for the gym or work, but if you are going on holiday it's easy because you are excited and positive.

Drink coffee mindfully: Caffeine

does help to increase alertness, so having a cup of coffee can help sharpen your mind and focus. But to get the energising effects of caffeine, you have to use it mindfully. It can cause insomnia, especially when consumed in large amounts or after 2pm.

Control stress: Stress-induced emotions can consume a huge amount of energy. Try to work on helping with any stresses in your life – relaxation therapies such as meditation and yoga will help.

Exercise: Exercising sensibly gives you a real feel-good factor boost, which in turn promotes positive vibes and energy. Physical activity sends oxygen and nutrients to your body's cells, helping your heart and lungs work more effi-

Be stubborn about your goals but flexible about your methods

Motivational quote of the day

ciently and boosting energy levels. Remember you don't need to run a marathon to get the benefits, moderate levels of exercise will also reap energy benefits.

Cut down on simple carbs: Foods heavy in carbohydrates can leave you feeling sluggish, especially simple carbs like those found in white bread, pasta and rice, sugary drinks and processed food.

They can initially provide a fast boost of energy but it's quickly followed by a crash as your blood sugar drops.

Stick to wholegrain, low-glycemic carbs that take longer to digest and therefore give you a more constant energy release, eg brown rice, oats and sweet potato.

Peppermint oil: This refreshing essential oil increases oxygen to the brain, which heightens focus and can stimulate the mind.

Add two to three drops of peppermint essential oil to your regular morning shampoo and conditioner to invigorate the scalp, energize your mind and wake you up.

You can also dab a few drops on your wrist during the day if you find



your energy levels dropping.

Better quality sleep: Sleeping badly can certainly make you feel exhausted the next day, especially as your body restores and repairs as you sleep.

Where possible try to keep a regu-

lar sleep pattern, which will help regulate your body and mind, boosting your moods and energy levels. Also, cutting down on the amount of alcohol you consume on an evening will promote a better quality of sleep.