

Gaining More Energy in Your Life

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There is a glaring health problem that's prevalent in almost every demographic in America and it's commonly ignored as something men and women simply have to live with.

It's called fatigue, and it can cripple your way of life and spiral out of control unless you take the reins and do something about it. Even doctors have been known to brush off the signs and symptoms of this condition unless the patient is adamant about getting the help and treatment they deserve.

Has Your Quality of Life Deteriorated Due to Fatigue?

When fatigue strikes, most people just chalk it up to a normal condition they have to endure due to a busy schedule or a less than perfectly fit body. But you don't have to live with fatigue.

You can do something about it if you are aware that it's happening and proactive in your response. Your body gives off many signs that your energy stores are becoming depleted.

Some of the symptoms that your energy levels are decreasing can be minimal in terms of how they affect your life, while others can be quite debilitating. One sign that your body needs help with energy restoration is that you begin craving sweets.

Sugar can give you a quick spike in energy levels, so when your body is feeling tired, it instantly craves something that can help it. The problem is, sugar is a temporary fix, and as soon as it wears off, you come crashing down – feeling more lethargic than you did before.

One of the most obvious signs that you're suffering from fatigue is that you keep craving sleep. It seems as if you never get a nap, and each morning when you

wake up, instead of starting your day off full of energy – you start off wishing you could go back to bed.

You may even have to sneak in naps throughout your day whenever possible. But even that may not be enough to make up for the sleep your body feels its missing. Do you become easily tired when doing simple activities?

If you tend to get winded after walking a short period of time, and the fatigue of everyday life is wearing you down, then this is a sign that your fatigue has gotten out of control.

Not only should your body have enough energy to support you throughout your day, but you should have enough to engage in more vigorous activities from time to time. Some people suffer from muscle weakness when their fatigue has spiraled out of control.

If it drains you to carry in the groceries or walk up a single flight of stairs, then your muscles are suffering from fatigue as well. Weight gain is a serious sign of diminished energy.

When people become overly lethargic, the sedentary lifestyle can cause the pounds to pile on. You have to be active and eating proper portions in order to maintain or lose weight.

Unfortunately, weight gain will cause the fatigue to get worse – so it's a vicious cycle. Conversely, some people experience trouble eating or having no appetite when they're suffering from fatigue.

They may be too tired to prepare meals or simply too stressed out to focus on food above all of their other problems in life. Some people may not be aware of this, but if your memory has gotten worse, it can also be a sign that fatigue has taken over and impaired this part of your brain function.

It may not be as serious as forgetting your entire life, but you may find it difficult to recall simple things that you should be able to during moments when you're overly exhausted. Sometimes pain can show up when fatigue is a problem.

Many people who suffer from this condition also experience frequent headaches or even serious migraines. You'll notice once your fatigue clears up that the headaches disappear or diminish.

If you feel overly nervous or anxious, this can be a sign of fatigue as well. When your energy stores are full, you have the clarity and stamina to handle anything in life. But when you're tired and stressed, it can all seem overwhelming.

If you're getting sick a lot, fatigue may be the cause. People who don't get enough sleep and who suffer from chronic stress often have an impaired immune system. This means you'll catch more common colds and other ailments than the average person whose energy stores are topped off.

Fatigue doesn't just show up as a series of physical signs and symptoms. It also takes an emotional toll on your well-being. Some people feel so out of sorts that it's almost as if they're a bystander in their own life, watching it all unfold like it's on a movie screen.

They're too tired and drained to actively participate, so they simply go through the motions. They're not mentally or emotionally present and participating in their life. People who are suffering from chronic fatigue often have severe mood swings.

They may go from happy one moment to angry or sad the next. Or, they may simply stay agitated on a continual basis due to the low level of energy they have available to fight everyday stress.

These people generally feel very overwhelmed with life. Even small decisions - such as what they're going to cook for dinner for their family that night - can cause an overwhelming sense of dread.

When major stress strikes, they're even less equipped to handle it and may simply shut down. Those with a problem with fatigue, often experience a sense of low self-esteem. Sometimes, this occurs because they don't have the energy required to put their best selves forward.

Therefore, they are unhappy with what they're presenting to the world and very critical of themselves. People with low energy stores often have an inability to

calm their mind. When stress takes a toll, they can't quiet it and simply rest and relax.

It plays in a loop inside their head, making them feel more and more drained as every minute ticks by throughout the day. If you have been aware of your fatigue, and possibly even been able to fix this problem in the past, you may start to wonder why your previous efforts are no longer working.

This is a sign that the fatigue has become a more serious problem in your life. It's no longer as simple as making sure you get a good night's sleep – it may be a complete lifestyle overhaul that's required.

Quick fixes that may have worked in the past, but now you're finding less helpful these days may include things such as an energy drink or a power protein bar. This type of edible energy solution may work for a shorter period of time until it doesn't work anymore because the root of your fatigue issue hasn't been addressed.

Cat naps, which may have sustained you in the past and helped you restore your energy levels, may not be effective any longer. In fact, napping may even be sabotaging your ability to fully restore your energy levels in the long run.

For those who suffer from fatigue due to stress, you may have been using deep breathing or relaxation techniques as a way to fight off the feeling of lethargy. And now, you realize it's not working as effectively for you anymore.

If any of this rings true for you, it's a sign that you need to dig deeper into the issue of energy and fatigue and pinpoint the problems and solutions that correspond to your life. Everyone is different in terms of what's causing their energy levels to be depleted as well as which solutions will work best for them.

Your Diet Can Drain Your Energy

When your energy levels are low, it may simply be the result of a poor diet. Your body has certain nutritional needs that allow it to recover and repair itself and provide you with the energy you need to get through each day.

Some foods detract from the amount of energy that you have, while other foods contribute to your stores of energy. The first thing you want to do is focus on eating the right kinds of carbs.

Some carbs give you immediate energy, but results in a crash soon thereafter. For example, eating a sugar-laden cinnamon roll in the morning might give you a little boost, but an hour later you could find yourself getting tired.

You always want to pair a carbohydrate with a protein whenever you eat. This helps you stabilize your blood sugar levels and prevent crashes throughout the day. So for instance, you may want to enjoy some fruit for breakfast, and pair it with a couple of scrambled eggs.

Proteins will provide your body with that full sensation so that you aren't constantly craving more food. Focus on lean proteins instead of fatty ones. You also want to enjoy plenty of vegetables in a wide variety of colors along with one or two servings of nuts each day.

If you do need carbs for energy for an activity, use fruit instead of sugar. Fruit does contain sugar, but it's a natural kind and is healthier for you in the long run. What kinds of foods should you avoid that may steal your energy?

First, anytime you eat out at a fast food restaurant, it has the potential to diminish your energy stores. It's always better to cook at home whenever possible. If you do eat out at a restaurant, look for healthier options and those that will sustain your energy levels rather than provide a quick fix.

Stay away from fried foods whenever possible. There are many other ways to cook meats and other foods that don't require lots of oil to cook them. You may want to invest in an air fryer if you still want the tasty crunch that fried foods often provide.

Whenever energy is a problem, you may want to stay away from turkey, which has tryptophan. This is often joked about whenever people think of Thanksgiving and how they have to nap after eating - but it's a very real occurrence, since tryptophan will make you sleepy.

Try to avoid carbs like pasta whenever you're trying to stay energetic throughout the day. Avoid as much junk food as you can. Start your day off with a nutritious breakfast that includes a protein and a carb and plan your other two meals to do the same.

Sometimes, it's not the food itself that poses a problem - but the way you eat it that drains your energy. For example, eating too much in one sitting can often contribute to the fatigue that you feel during the day.

Stuffing yourself is not the way to gain energy. Ideally, You will have six small meals during the day. That includes three main meals and three snacks. Consuming food this way helps keep your metabolism revved up and gives you energy simultaneously.

You also want to avoid eating too late at night. Heading to the refrigerator right before bed disrupts your sleep. It can often result in a bout of acid reflux. Try to have your meals at least three hours before bedtime.

Going to bed in a state where you're not hungry, but you're also not full is ideal. When you want to focus on your nutritional habits and how they affect your fatigue, you want to look at everything - what you're eating, how much you're eating, and when you're eating it. Make small changes over time instead of drastically altering your entire way of life.

Habits that Drain Your Energy

If fatigue is causing you problems, it may be time to change some of your existing habits. Everyone has habits that can be detrimental in their life, but some can cause more damage than others when it comes down to how much energy you have or don't have.

Sometimes, the bad habit is nothing more than you needing to add something to your daily routine. For example, whenever you don't drink enough water, you will suffer from mild dehydration symptoms.

Dehydration drains your body of its energy and most people don't take into consideration how simple activities can cause them to become dehydrated.

Add exercise or increased activity to that equation and you have a recipe for disaster.

It doesn't have to be a severe case of dehydration to cause a drain on your energy. You don't have to be walking in the desert for days to get dehydrated. Even waking up in the morning, you should make it a point to consume water, because your body has gone without it as you slept.

Sometimes, it's not what you need to add to your life - but what you need to take away that will ultimately give you more energy. For example, some people use alcohol to unwind at the end of a hard day.

Normally, there's nothing wrong with this habit - but if you are suffering from fatigue, you may want to either reduce or eliminate alcohol from your diet. Alcohol itself has sedative properties, which cause your blood sugar levels to rise and then crash.

Another bad habit that you may want to eliminate in order to give you more energy is smoking. Some people smoke because they say it calms their nerves during stressful times.

But smoking also restrict your blood flow, which can cause your energy levels to decrease. Nicotine is a stimulant and it can make you feel restless initially, and then zap your energy shortly after.

Sleeping Affects Your Energy

Some people go to bed at a certain time and get up the next morning and assume they've had a full night's sleep. But sometimes, your fatigue is caused by a less than perfect night of sleep.

There's a right and a wrong way to get enough rest. First, you want to have a good sleeping environment. This is often known as sleep hygiene. The perfect sleep environment will be free from distractions.

This means that you're not working or watching TV in the bedroom. Any kind of technology should be kept in other rooms, not only so that they aren't tempting

to you, but because many of them emit a low light that can interrupt your sleep and cause fatigue.

When you set your alarm, try to keep it positioned out of your reach. This makes it harder for you to hit the snooze button when the alarm goes off in the morning. Hitting the snooze button can actually make you feel more sluggish, whereas waking up and putting your feet on the ground to get your day going can start you off with more energy.

Getting enough sleep is very important, but you don't want to get *too* much sleep. This can also contribute to fatigue if you're not careful. Too much sleep leads to low energy levels, and this can make you feel drained all day.

It puts your sleep cycle out of whack where you begin depending on more sleep to get you through the day because it's become a habit. Try to get yourself on a schedule that stays the same seven days a week.

Go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every day. Allow yourself plenty of rest, which for adults is between 7 to 9 hours. Everyone is different, and as you age you may need less sleep, but aim for a healthy amount.

Your Morning Schedule Can Drain Your Energy

Have you ever felt fatigued before you even left your house in the morning? Maybe you woke up feeling rested, but by the time you were leaving the house, you were already drained.

Some people have a very chaotic morning routine that can deplete all of their energy stores quickly. Your body needs a bit of time to wake up in the morning. Allow yourself time to casually open your eyes take some deep breaths and rise without rushing.

You don't need to launch right into all of your tasks for the day the second your feet hit the floor. Give yourself a way to ease into your day, whether that's through meditation, reading the morning newspaper, or sipping a cup of coffee and doing nothing at all.

You want to avoid tackling stressful things immediately. Don't wake up and instantly begin paying all of your bills for the day. Don't try to handle a major health crisis or family drama in your first hour awake.

Avoid checking your emails and work-related tasks until it's time to address those topics. Stressful things can drain your energy quickly and you don't want to start your day that way.

Nutritionally, make sure that you never skip your breakfast. You don't want to start on a cycle of caffeine and sugar with nothing else in your system, because your energy levels will crash quickly.

Instead, make sure you have some lean protein paired with some carbs in the morning. If you skip your breakfast, your metabolism will slow down. Your body has already been without food as you slept, so now it is looking for some fuel to get going.

Exercise Can Give or Drain Energy

Many people falsely believe that if they exercise, it will make them feel even more tired. Actually, the reverse is true in most cases. Putting yourself on an exercise regimen will help you build stamina and energy stores over a long period of time.

One of the reasons that exercise contributes to better energy levels is because it improves your blood circulation. When your blood is circulating better, you feel energized.

It wakes you up internally and gives you the boost that you need to complete your tasks during the day. Exercise is also a powerful mental motivator. It helps you clear your mind and makes it easier to focus.

When your mental energy is alert, it helps you restore your physical energy levels. Emotionally, exercise calms your stress levels, which can drain your energy as well. If you have the stress hormone cortisol coursing throughout your body, then you can fight it by releasing endorphins that you gain when exercising.

Just because exercise has benefits that allow you to fight fatigue, it doesn't mean that you should overdo it. Too much exercise is equally damaging. You have to have a balance. Make sure you're not using exercise as a way to avoid dealing with the issues in your life.

Work Habits Drain Your Energy

You may be very dedicated to your career, and that's an admirable quality to have. But sometimes, we neglect our physical and emotional well-being in order to accomplish tasks at work.

If you work at an office job, where you're sitting eight hours a day, you may feel like you have no reason to feel fatigued. After all, it's not as if you were on your feet all day. But being sedentary can actually cause you to not have as much energy.

You need to take frequent breaks - even if it's only for a few minutes. Make sure you get up and walk around so that your blood can circulate and you will remain alert and aware during the day.

Walk the hallways, or go up and down a flight of stairs to keep from being completely sedentary. Analyze the task you do at work each and every day. Do they all need to be done while sitting, or is there an opportunity for you to stand and move around as you accomplish them?

You may be able to take a phone call while pacing, or go to see a colleague in your office rather than email them or talk on the phone. Another work habit that may need to be limited is multitasking.

Many people mistakenly believe that they get more done if they're doing several things at once, but even though it appears that way, multitasking can sometimes drain your energy because you weren't focusing on completing one job at a time and you can become easily overwhelmed.

Energy Boosters for the Afternoon

Many people suffer from fatigue at a certain time of the day. Maybe they start their morning feeling energetic, but by mid-afternoon, they're already tired. If

this describes you, you may want to select some strategic energy boosters for your afternoon schedule.

Sometimes, this can be remedied with a simple vitamin supplement regimen. You'll need to be tested to see if your blood is deficient in certain vitamins before you start taking any.

But, if your vitamin D is deficient, for example, then you may find that taking a simple D3 supplement helps you maintain energy levels throughout the day without a midday slump.

Some people can get away with a very short, five minute deep breathing activity. Getting enough oxygen can help you feel more energetic and refreshed to finish out your day strong.

You may even want to engage in a short meditation session, and nobody even needs to know that this is what you're doing. Another thing you can do if you suffer from midday fatigue is to eat an energy snack.

The process of eating restores some of your energy levels, regardless of what you eat. But you want to avoid the vending machine, which is packed with unhealthy foods - and instead bring a healthy snack such as a fruit and protein from home.

You can also leave your work area temporarily and take a walk. Getting up and moving around will give you more energy. Make sure you're not taking a smoke break. This will have the opposite effect.

Taking a physical and mental break from work in the middle of the day can sometimes reinvigorate you and provide you with enough energy until bedtime. Use your breaks strategically and do something that gives you energy, rather than drains it.

Use Natural Energy Boosts

There are many things you can do to fight fatigue that don't require taking any supplements or going to a doctor for a prescription. You can try natural remedies to see if they assist you in getting more energy.

The first thing you can do is to make sure you're spending plenty of time outside in the sun. You have to be careful to wear sunscreen and avoid getting skin cancer, but once you protect your skin, it is beneficial for you to get fresh air and natural vitamin D from the sun.

Sometimes, when people are suffering from fatigue, they tend to stay indoors and rest more than they should. Getting outside and walking, gardening, or even resting in the sun can help you get a good night's sleep where you will have more energy the following day.

Another thing you might try that can naturally help you fight fatigue is to start listening to music that you enjoy on a regular basis. Music can give you an instant energy boost. You can move to it as exercise or simply allow it to calm your frazzled nerves.

Music can help put issues into perspective and it can also give you a mental break whenever you are feeling overwhelmed from the chaos of your day. You may want to pick music that you naturally enjoy, but don't be afraid to try new sounds that you typically wouldn't listen to for sheer entertainment purposes.

While exercise is a great energy booster over a long period of time, you don't have to engage in vigorous cardiovascular or strength training exercises to enjoy the benefits. You can start a simple stretching routine that can help you fight fatigue and restore your energy levels.

Doing a short mini stretch routine can boost your energy because it helps your blood circulate throughout your system. This improved blood flow will give more oxygen to your muscles, allowing them to physically support you as you move from place to place. You don't have to do it for very long – just long enough to loosen up your muscles.

Ending Your Day with the Right Energy

People who suffer from fatigue often head to bed without any resolution or strategy for improving their energy levels for the following day. Most people who come home from a hard day at work simply want to sit, watch TV, and eat.

This adds to the fatigue and can become a horrible cycle that makes it impossible to feel energetic. It's okay to rest when you come home from work, but then get up and do a little work around the house or go for a walk before or after dinner.

This can eliminate that tired feeling you suffer from, even if initially you feel a bit more tired. Give it some time to work. Make sure you skip the drive-through on your way home from work.

Some people who suffer from fatigue are so tired, that they can't fathom having to cook dinner at the end of a hard day. But loading up on fast food at the end of the day will deplete your energy stores later.

Make sure you choose lighter meals, not heavy ones, because they are more easily digested and better for you in terms of being able to get a good night's sleep. They will also help you avoid packing on the pounds, which is something that contributes to fatigue in the first place.

If you want to, you can do a bit of light exercise in the evening. Now is not the time to engage in too much exercise. You don't want to be too riled up before bed. Try to do some light exercises such as Pilates or yoga.

Addressing a problem such as fatigue is never a cut and dry issue. Everyone is different, and every solution will affect each individual differently. What works for one person may not work for you.

Make a plan of attack to improve your energy levels over time. First, analyze what your current life situation is like. Take a look at your habits and routines as well as your stress levels and sleep habits and see if you're making any glaring mistakes that could be zapping your energy from you.

Slowly begin replacing the negative items with routines, mindset shifts, and tasks that will support you in your quest for more energy. Don't try to change your entire life in one day.

This will be overwhelming and frustrating and can cause you to give up. As you implement a variety of suggestions and solutions, make sure you track which ones are working and which ones are not.

Give each one enough time to have an effect on your body and mind. You want to be methodical with the implementation of an energy action plan.



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