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10 Ways to Boost Your Energy Naturally

Men's Journal
December 3, 2014

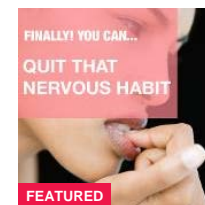


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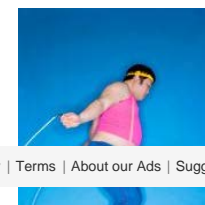
By Melaina Junti

Sometimes you just need a little jolt of energy, whether it's to help get you moving in the morning or to power you through the final hours of the workday. The problem is we too often reach for the wrong pick-me-ups, says Dr. Jacob Teitelbaum, author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic*. "Some things, such as sugar, are energy loan sharks," he says. "They step on the gas pedal to make you go, but they don't put any gas in your tank to keep your energized." Case in point: If you guzzle an energy drink, which is packed with sugar, you'll get an insta-rush followed shortly by a crash. Instead of such faux fixes, you need things that'll nourish your body and help it produce energy on its own. Here are 10 easy ways to energize naturally.

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Eat Protein

For sustained energy that won't jack you up and leave you empty later, eat something with protein. Go for an omelet at breakfast, or snack on nuts or Greek yogurt in the afternoon. "Protein supplies steady energy that lasts for several hours," Teitelbaum says. "The body converts it to energy slowly and consistently."

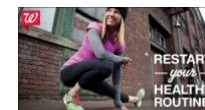
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Sip Coffee or Tea

Caffeine gets a bad rap because it can cause restlessness, insomnia, and even heart problems when you exceed the recommended cap of 300 mg a day (that's roughly three small cups of coffee). However, as long as you don't overdo it, Teitelbaum says caffeine is a great way to boost energy. Just be sure it comes from a healthy source. Skip the sugar-packed sodas and energy drinks, and sip coffee or tea instead — but no more than a couple of cups a day. "If you drink a whole pot of coffee, the high amount of caffeine will stress your adrenal glands, the body's stress handlers, and your blood sugar drops." Also, sugar makes it worse, so go for a French roast over a Frappuccino.



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Drink Water

If you're feeling sluggish, there's a good chance you're dehydrated. Nearly every system in the body requires water to function properly, so if it doesn't have enough, it slows down. "Drink an 8-ounce glass of cold water, and see if you don't have more energy in just a few minutes," says Teitelbaum.

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Get More Sunshine

If you need a kick-start, step outside the office for a few minutes and grab some sunshine. “Sunshine boosts energy by prompting your body to make vitamin D and happiness chemicals [like serotonin],” says Teitelbaum. “The current advice to avoid the sun is deadly — we need it. The proper advice is to avoid sunburn.”

Eat Chocolate

Eating a small piece of chocolate can give you a quick, natural energy boost, says Teitelbaum. Chocolate contains a modest amount of caffeine, along with theobromine, caffeine’s gentler cousin. Plus, in moderation, it isn’t as bad for you as you think. “People don’t realize that chocolate is a health food,” he says. “It’s full of phenols and other antioxidants that keep the heart and brain healthy.” The darker the chocolate the more nutrients, caffeine, and theobromine you’ll get. But Teitelbaum says even breaking off a few squares of a milk-chocolate Hershey’s bar can do the trick. Just don’t eat more than 1 ounce a day — that’s a little more than half of your average bar — because chocolate still has a lot of sugar and fat.

Load Up on Magnesium

"Magnesium is critical for more than 300 energy reactions in the body," Teitelbaum says. "But most Americans are magnesium deficient, which can cause fatigue, muscle pain, or anxiety." Try to work more magnesium into your diet. Teitelbaum says almonds are especially high in this mineral; green, leafy vegetables have a lot too.



Photo By Getty Images

Take a Mental Break

Numerous studies show that taking time out to give your brain and body a rest, especially during the workday, will boost your energy and make you more productive. All you need is a 10- to 20-minute break, says Teitelbaum. "Whether it's meditation, prayer, or listening to music, find a quiet space and do something that calms your mind and body." It can be in the morning before you get going, or midday when you're feeling tapped out.



Photo By Getty Images

Drink Some Vitamins

"Poor nutrition is one of the biggest things keeping our bodies from making the energy we need," says Teitelbaum. While it's best to eat a whole-food diet to get all of the essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients, the reality is we often pick processed foods without much nutritional value. To help your body produce energy, Teitelbaum suggests supplementing with vitamins — and drinking them, rather than popping a pill (or handfuls of pills). "Pills often don't dissolve properly so the nutrients don't get absorbed, and they have added binders and fillers that your body doesn't need," he says. Instead, find a powdered multivitamin drink mix that includes all the energy-producing essentials: "You want 5 grams of ribose, the key energy nutrient for the body," Teitelbaum says. "Also shoot for at least 50 mg of each of the B vitamins, 200 mg of magnesium, 1,000 IU of vitamin D, 15 mg of zinc, 100 mg of vitamin C, and 200 mcg of iodine."



Photo By Getty Images

Rub Your Ears

"Grab your ears between your thumb and your forefinger, and rub up and down for 10 to 30 seconds," Teitelbaum says.

"Massaging them stimulates all of your body's energy centers, which run through the ears, to get energy flowing." Skeptical? Try it right now.



Photo By Getty Images

Turn Off the News

"Network television news is all about selling fear and creating the 'crisis' of the day," Teitelbaum says. "It can bring you down and tire you out. If it doesn't feel good, turn it off. There are better ways to stay informed. You'll free up an enormous amount of energy to deal with whatever it is you're actually facing."

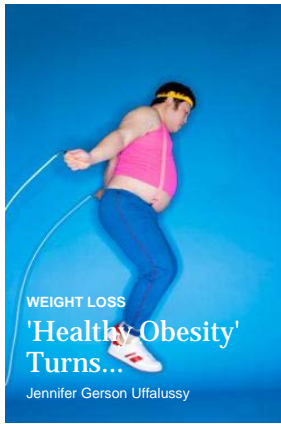
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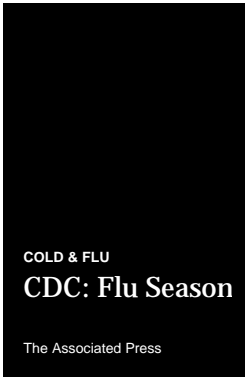
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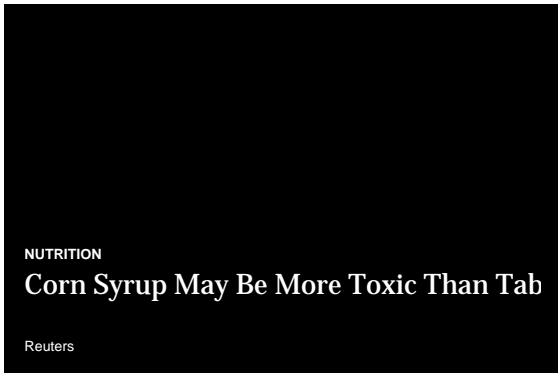


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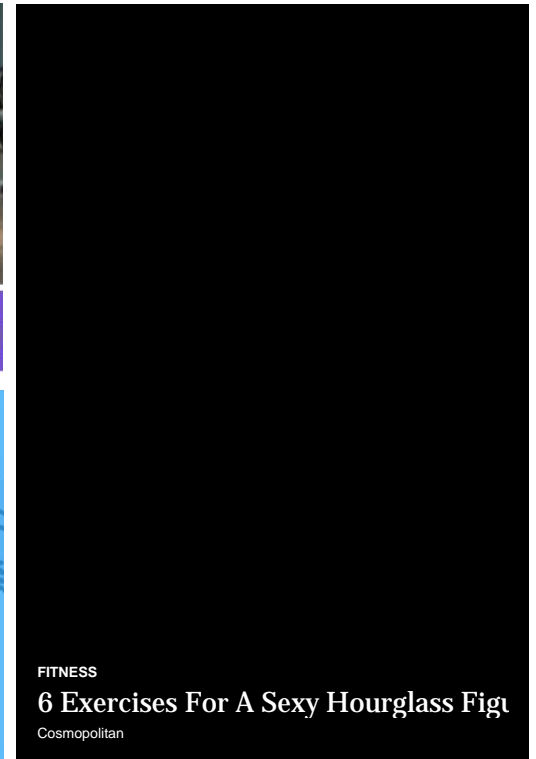
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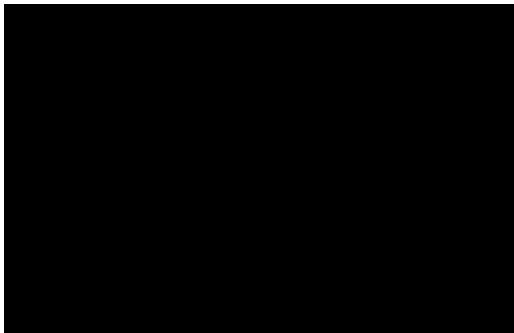
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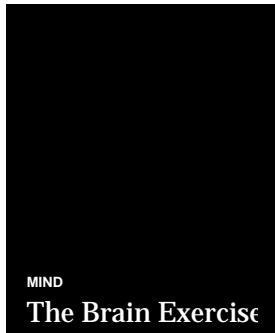
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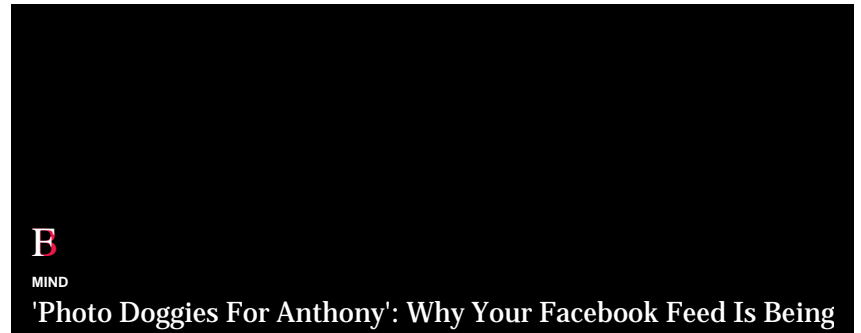
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