

# WHEENK! HEALTH

## THE ENERGY CRISIS?

*FEELING SLUGGISH? A FEW SIMPLE TRICKS CAN PUT A SPRING BACK IN YOUR STEP.*

JUDGING BY THE LINES AT STARBUCKS, THE SUPER BIG GULPS AND THE AMOUNT OF "ENERGY" DRINKS ON THE SHELVES IN THE SUPERMARKETS THESE DAYS, WE HAVE BECOME DEPENDENT ON A "CAFFEINE FIX" TO GET US THROUGH THE DAY.

A RECENT REPORT PUBLISHED BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) DISCOVERED THAT THE AVERAGE AMERICAN FEELS ENERGETIC ONLY 19 DAYS A MONTH. THAT MEANS THAT 1/3 OF YOUR LIFE IS SPENT IN A SLUMP. OUR SOCIETY SPENDS TOO MUCH TIME STRESSED OUT BEHIND COMPUTERS, INDOORS, DRINKING COFFEE AND EATING SUGAR INSTEAD OF REJUVENATING OURSELVES IN A HEALTHY WAY. MAKING A FEW SIMPLE CHANGES, LIKE EATING THE RIGHT FOODS, HANGING OUT WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND SIMPLY WALKING AROUND MORE WILL HELP GIVE YOU A LIFT. HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS TO HELP BOOST YOUR ENERGY:

1. TRY SOMETHING NEW! NEW EXPERIENCES GIVE YOU A RUSH. WHEN PEOPLE DO SOMETHING NOVEL A CHEMICAL CALLED DOPAMINE IS RELEASED IN YOUR BRAIN. DOPAMINE IS A NEUROTRANSMITTER THAT ACTS ON THE SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM PRODUCING EFFECTS SUCH AS INCREASED HEART RATE. DOPAMINE IS ALSO A CHEMICAL THAT GEARS US UP TO DO MORE. SO GO TAKE A TRIP, VISIT A MUSEUM OR LEARN SOMETHING NEW.
2. MOVE AROUND! THE MORE ACTIVE YOU ARE, THE BETTER YOUR CIRCULATION WILL BE. GOOD CIRCULATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ENERGY BECAUSE BLOOD TRANSPORTS OXYGEN AND NUTRIENTS, WHICH IS FUEL FOR OUR BODIES. GET UP THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY, MOVE! REGULAR EXERCISE ALSO BOOSTS THE ENERGY STORES BY CONDITIONING THE BODY TO MAKE OPTIMAL USE OF OXYGEN.
3. BREATHE DEEPLY! SHALLOW BREATHING PREVENTS THE BODY FROM GETTING ENOUGH OXYGEN. MANY PEOPLE FAIL TO BREATHE DEEPLY WHEN THEY FEEL TENSE, WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO FEELING "BLAH" BY THE END OF A STRESS FILLED DAY. CORRECT BREATHING INCLUDES BREATHS THAT ARE DEEPER, QUIETER, SLOWER AND MORE REGULAR. INCREASING OXYGEN INTAKE FORCES MORE OXYGEN INTO CELLS, WHICH SLOWS HEART RATE, LOWERS BLOOD PRESSURE AND IMPROVES CIRCULATION, ULTIMATELY PROVIDING MORE ENERGY. CORRECTING YOUR POSTURE WILL ALSO HELP INCREASE YOUR ENERGY. OPENING UP YOUR CHEST CAVITY INCREASES OXYGEN INTAKE BY AS MUCH AS 30%, MAKING MORE ENERGY AVAILABLE TO YOUR MIND AND MUSCLES. CLASSES SUCH AS YOGA AND TAI CHI HAVE ALSO BEEN PROVEN VERY BENEFICIAL IN PROMOTING CIRCULATION AND OXYGEN INTAKE.
4. EAT WELL! EATING CONSISTENTLY THREE SMALL MEALS WITH SNACKS IN BETWEEN WILL KEEP YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL AT A CONSTANT LEVEL SO YOU DON'T EXPERIENCE HIGHS AND LOWS THAT OCCUR WHEN YOU GO WITHOUT FOOD FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. ALL YOUR MEALS AND SNACKS SHOULD CONSIST OF BOTH COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES (PRODUCE AND WHOLE GRAINS) TO PRODUCE FUEL AND PROTEIN (NUTS AND CHEESE) TO GIVE YOU ENDURANCE. SNACKS OF REFINED CARBOHYDRATES, LIKE COOKIES AND PRETZELS, PROVIDE AN INITIAL RUSH, BUT THE BODY BURNS THEM SO QUICKLY YOUR ENERGY IS SHORT LIVED.
5. DO THINGS THAT LIFT YOUR SPIRITS! FUN PEOPLE, RHYTHMIC MUSIC, AND FUNNY MOVIES CAN BOOST YOUR ENERGY LEVEL. ANYTHING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD MAY RAISE YOUR LEVEL OF ENDORPHINS, THE SAME CHEMICALS THAT ARE RELEASED WHEN YOU EXERCISE.
6. DRINK UP! YOUR BODY NEEDS WATER TO TRANSPORT OXYGEN TO YOUR CELLS. DEHYDRATION CAN RESULT IN FATIGUE AND HEADACHES.
7. GO OUTSIDE! AT LEAST ONCE DURING THE DAY, GET OUTSIDE. STUDIES SHOW THAT SPENDING TIME OUTSIDE PROVIDES AN ENERGY BOOST BY REDUCING STRESS HORMONES AND LOWERING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE. SUNLIGHT CAN ALSO INCREASE THE BODY'S PRODUCTION OF SEROTONIN, WHICH LIFTS MOODS AND INCREASES ENERGY.

IMPROVE YOUR ENERGY OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BY TRYING ONE, TWO OR ALL OF THESE ENERGY BOOSTING IDEAS. YOUR REWARD WILL BE FEELING GOOD MORE DAYS OF THE MONTH, BRINGING BACK THE SPRING IN YOUR STEP.

*TIP: IF BREATHING IS TOUGH FOR YOU THERE ARE SIMPLE BREATHING TECHNIQUES THAT CAN HELP YOU. HERE IS ONE WE RECOMMEND: PUT THE TIP OF YOUR TONGUE AGAINST THE RIDGE BEHIND YOUR UPPER TEETH. EXHALE COMPLETELY THROUGH YOUR MOUTH, MAKING A WHOOSH SOUND. THEN INHALE DEEPLY THROUGH YOUR NOSE FOR A COUNT OF FOUR, HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR A COUNT OF 4 AND EXHALE THROUGH YOUR MOUTH FOR A COUNT OF 6. REPEAT FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR BREATHS.*

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