

## Eating for Energy



1. Get the right amount of calories.
  - Too little calories – decreases metabolism, makes us lethargic
  - Too many calories – overeating cause fatigue
  - Avoid vicious cycle: overeating → fatigue & fatigue → overeating
  - Focus on portion control, adequate sleep, and stress management.
2. Eat *at least* 3 times per day – if not more!
  - Eating breakfast provides fuel to get you through the morning & jumps starts metabolism.
  - Eating throughout the day, keeps a steady supply of food energy. This keeps blood sugar levels in check & energy up. Keeps metabolism up.
  - For some people, eating 6 mini-meals a day works. For other people, eating 3 meals a day works. Find what works for you!
3. Eat whole foods; avoid processed foods.
  - Processed foods tend to make us feel sluggish. They are filled with simple sugars and fat. \*Traditional vending machine snacks tend to be processed.
  - Eat wholesome foods: balance complex carbohydrates with protein and heart-healthy fats. This will provide lasting energy – fiber, protein, and fat slow the release of glucose into the blood – and will help prevent energy crashes and overeating.
  - Plan and pack your snacks for work. Avoid the vending machine!
4. Drink plenty of fluids, especially water.
  - Dehydration can cause headache or fatigue.
  - Drink ½ cup to 1 cup every couple of hours.
  - Tote water bottle around or keep a full glass nearby.
5. Avoid over consumption of alcohol.
  - Alcohol is a depressant; however, several hours later, it acts like a stimulant. Alcohol may help you to fall asleep, but may also disrupt your sleep several hours later.
6. Avoid caffeine (coffee, soda, energy drinks, etc).
  - Caffeine tricks the body into thinking fuel has been provided. Caffeine may provide short-term fuel, but once the caffeine rush wears off, the body realized that is has nothing to use for energy. The result is exhaustion and hunger (usually followed by overeating).
7. Exercise
  - 30 minutes 3 times per week
  - Natural energy booster and mood lifter. Endorphins, increased fitness, and enhanced energy consumption.
8. Get enough sleep! – There is no replacement for a good night's sleep☺

**Source:** *Today's Dietitian*, "Eating for Energy." Dina Aronson, MS, RD, April 2009.

**Energy-sustaining snacks:**

- Mix of nuts and dried fruit
- Yogurt topped with granola
- Piece of fruit with peanut butter
- 5 whole grain crackers with hummus or salsa
- Half of a sandwich made with whole grain bread
- ½ cup berries and 1 palm full of walnuts
- Smoothie made with frozen fruit, chia, and milk

**Sweat Rate**

1. Weigh yourself nude right before a run.
2. Run at race pace for one hour, keeping track of how much you drink (in ounces) during the run.
3. After the run, strip down, towel off any sweat, and weigh yourself nude again.
4. Subtract your weight from your pre-run weight and convert to ounces. Then add to that number however many ounces of liquid you consumed on your run. (For example, if you lost a pound and drank 16 ounces of fluid, your total fluid loss is 32 ounces.)
5. To determine how much you should be drinking about every 15 minutes, divide your hourly fluid loss by 4 (in the above example it would be 8 ounces).
6. Because the test only determines your sweat losses for the environmental conditions you run in that day, you should retest on another day when conditions are different to see how your sweat rate is affected. You should also redo the test during different seasons, in different environments (such as higher or lower altitudes), and as you become faster, since pace also affects your sweat rate.

*Source: Today's Dietitian, "Eating for Energy." Dina Aronson, MS, RD, April 2009.*