



Preferred Health Partners

Preferred Health Partners Newsletter

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By Dr. Steve Lau (Park Cities)

How Can I Improve My Fatigue

Perceived energy is a vital component of overall well-being, and a perceived drop in energy (or fatigue) can be a concerning symptom. While this newsletter is just a starting point to help guide a conversation with your primary care physician, it is by no means a comprehensive guide to all the possible causes of and treatments for fatigue.

Fatigue can be a result of dysfunction of nearly every organ system in the body, including the nervous system, cardiovascular system, lungs, digestive system, kidneys, liver, the endocrine system, glucose metabolism, electrolyte balance in the body, the immune system, muscular conditioning, bone marrow health (particularly as it relates to possible anemia), sleep health, and overall mental health. Finding the possible root causes of fatigue requires in-depth questioning and appropriate testing.

When discussing fatigue with your physician, the following clues are important: 1) timeframe of your fatigue 2) nature and timing of your fatigue (whether severe enough to impact your work or personal life, and whether the fatigue is constant or intermittent, or if it varies based on timing of the day) 3) any relieving factors and exacerbating factors of your fatigue 4) any associated symptoms (symptoms that are focused on a certain organ system, such as neurologic, cardiac, lungs, etc) 5) any co-existing medical conditions 6) current medications and supplements list.

In some cases, even after a thorough discussion, exam and testing by your primary care physician, fatigue symptoms may NOT be attributable to a specific organ system (or set of systems). While this situation can be vexing for both the patient and the physician, the fatigue can still be generally managed (i.e. finding ways to maintain or increase your energy, while remaining vigilant for potential causes for the fatigue not yet discovered).

First, sleep is fundamental for physical and mental recovery, and should not be overlooked as a way to increase your energy. While there is no universal number of hours of sleep that works for everyone, sleep experts generally recommend 7 to 9 hours per night for adults. An individualized sleep schedule can be made, carefully tracking and correlating hours of sleep and any sleep-related symptoms, such as morning fatigue, excessive daytime sleepiness, and brain fog. In addition to the quantity of sleep, the quality of your sleep also matters greatly. If optimizing the number of hours in bed does not seem to solve sleep-related symptoms, then consulting your primary care physician about other testing and treatment options is usually a good idea.

Another often overlooked factor is the state of hydration. While severe dehydration causes severe symptoms, such as muscle cramps, dizziness, low blood pressure, and even fainting, the subtle effects of mild-to-moderate dehydration can cause include symptoms such as mental and physical fatigue (along with dry mouth, headaches, constipation, body aches, and even reduced heart and muscle function).

Food is the essential fuel for your body to derive energy. Therefore proper nutrition is key to maintaining and improving your energy. An appropriate diet is one that takes into your account your specific dietary needs based on activity level, body weight, any coexisting medical conditions and of course, your food preferences. A good rule of thumb is to stay away from highly-processed foods which are not as nutritionally dense as fresh produce, fruits, grains and meats. Again, speaking with your personal physician and possibly a dietitian can help you tailor a diet plan that fits your needs and food preferences.

Exercise has been shown to improve both physical and mental energy. In medical studies, people who exercise show improved mitochondrial, cardiovascular and muscular efficiency, all helping to boost energy. In addition, the cognitive benefits of exercise include improved levels of neurotransmitters that regulate mood, alertness, and even enthusiasm.

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Exercise has been shown to reduce brain fog, enhance cognitive function and even treat symptoms of depression as successfully as using prescription antidepressant medications in some cases.

Lastly, life stress can rob you of both physical and mental energy. Please make sure that you set aside enough time for hobbies, social events and personal time to relax. If you have symptoms of low mood or are struggling with stress in your life, please have a discussion with your personal physician. As always, please consult your personal physician before making any major changes in your diet, lifestyle, sleeping habits or medication or supplement regimen.

Administrative Updates

Please welcome our newest physician - **Dr. Omesh Singh** (Internal Medicine). He is located at our Southwest Fort Worth Practice. Dr. Singh is accepting New Patients. Patients may find a list of all Preferred Health Partner physicians accepting new patients by visiting ntphp.com/accepting-new-patients.html

Healthy Habits:

Summer Berry Protein Muffins

Yields: ~24 muffins

Ingredients

- 3 cups of Oat Flour
- 1 cup of Unflavored Protein Powder
- 1 tablespoon Baking Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Baking Soda
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 1-1/2 tablespoons Ground Cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons Psyllium Husk Powder
- 1 cup plain full fat Greek Yogurt or Cottage Cheese
- 1 ¼ cup FairLife Milk
- 1 cup Coconut oil (melted) or Avocado oil
- 1 cup fresh Blueberries
- 1/2 cup fresh Raspberries
- 1/2 cup diced fresh Strawberries
- 1 cup Unsweetened Applesauce
- 1 tablespoon of Honey or Maple Syrup

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Line muffin tins with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oat flour, protein powder, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and psyllium husk until thoroughly combined.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the Greek yogurt or cottage cheese, eggs, oil, unsweetened applesauce and honey or maple syrup. Whisk in 1 cup of the milk until everything is smooth.
4. Make a well in the middle of the dry mixture. Pour the wet mixture into the well and stir until just combined.
5. Gently fold in the blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries. Stir just enough to distribute the fruit.
6. Using a 2¼-inch ice cream scoop (or a large spoon), spoon the batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling the liners about two-thirds full.
7. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a cake tester inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean and enjoy!



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