


# Eating for Energy



By Karl J. Mincin

When was the last time you felt that if you had any more energy you wouldn't know what to do with yourself? It seems that each day people grow more and more tired. While this is really nothing new, fatigue today is still one of the main reasons patients visit health care professionals. Energy, like money, is a complex substance. The more you spend, the more you must produce. Diet and nutrition therapy can provide a big boost to properly managing your energy budget.

## Food as Fuel

Eating enough food is obviously vital to producing adequate energy. For some people, skipping breakfast is the first mistake of the day. However, a more common but unrecognized energy drain is overeating. The digestion of food consumes more energy than any other at-rest bodily process. Taxing the digestive system by eating more than is nutritionally necessary is the first step to sluggishness.

An additional benefit to systematic under-eating is longer life span. Eating light but well requires focusing on nu-

trient-dense, color-rich foods such as dark greens and other vegetables, whole grains and beans, while avoiding high-sugar, empty-calorie processed foods. Because they have more nutrition and less sugar we should be eating at least three times more vegetables than fruit.

## The Drain of Digestion

Because digestion is the body's main energy-consuming process, proper food combining, which simplifies digestion, can free up much energy. While some have carried proper food combining to an extreme, its two basic principles are physiologically sound: (1) Eat fruit by itself, 30 minutes before or three hours after other foods; and (2) Eat only one "concentrated" food (everything except fruits and vegetables: meats, grains, beans, nuts, etc.) at a time, with any number of vegetables. I have observed that this simple dietary approach (which is not restrictive in terms of what is eaten, but rather when) not only boosts your energy, but can improve a host of health conditions such as digestive problems, arthritis, obesity, skin conditions and more. The "Proper Food Combining Fact Sheet" provides more detail.

## Tired or Toxic?

Since vitamins and minerals are the spark that ignites the body's energy factory, getting enough for your individual need is critical. On the other hand, in the search for enhanced energy an often-neglected aspect is toxicity, an excess accumulation of chemicals and heavy metals. Even when a person is consuming adequate nutrients, toxic elements can interfere with their proper utilization so that we not only don't benefit from the vitamins, but actually exert a toxic effect themselves. It can be a double whammy! Before adding any nutritional remedy to increase energy, first ask yourself, "is there something I need to first subtract?" (A self-test questionnaire, "Do I Need Internal Cleansing and Liver Detoxification?" may prove helpful.)

## Super Foods

In addition to the common foods discussed, green food concentrates are a good first step up the energy ladder. Of all the different types available, I have received from patients the best feedback on barley grass. While it has many other benefits including detoxification, nutrient supplementation, blood sugar balance, appetite regulation and weight management, its most pronounced effect is more energy. The best results are obtained by taking it on an empty stomach before breakfast and early afternoon before that mid-afternoon slump. Consistently, I hear that it has carried people successfully through this critical time of the day without the coffee, cola or candy. (Request a fact sheet on Multi-Green, a blendable superfood and herbal concen-

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## Nutrition

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trate, containing energizing herbs and nutrient concentrates.)

## Herbal Energy

While there are many stimulant herbs, only a few energizing herbs are safe for long-term use to increase natural energy. Ginseng is one of the oldest and finest. Classified as an adaptogen, it not only serves as a pick-me-up, it also helps the body to cope with the effects of stress. Siberian (pseudo) Ginseng is a fair starting point, but other authentic types may produce better results for certain individuals. Deciding which type of ginseng is best suited to one's individual needs is best accomplished with the Herb Saliva Test. The test will also identify additional synergistic herbs for better overall balance, safety and greater effect.

## B is for BOOST

There are many, many other energizing nutrients. B vitamins, especially B12, should not be overlooked. A new oral spray B12 is better absorbed than sublingual, and even injectable, B12. Magnesium is another essential element.

On hair analysis test results, deficiencies of magnesium are actually more common than of calcium. Creatine is also producing good results, especially in athletes. Lipoic acid, known as the "universal antioxidant" can accomplish even more than Coenzyme Q10. Remember vitamin "X" — exercise. Any investment you make in physical activity will pay at least double the dividends! (A comparison chart, "Energizing Nutrients," detailing these and other supplements, is available upon request.)

## Avoid Energy Drainers

Although I'm not a "no-no" nutritionist, a discussion of increasing energy would be incomplete without saying NO CAFFEINE AND SUGAR! Any apparent, short-term lift is quickly offset by a drop of equal proportion - and in the long term weakened adrenal glands, blood sugar disturbances (hypoglycemia and/or diabetes), cardiovascular and other degenerative diseases. As stated, there are better ways.

Just as when a person comes up financially short month after month, they begin tracking their expenses to iden-

tify where the money is going, so too when we come up short on energy, it's important to assess hidden, underlying causes. Identifying energy "leaks" is no simple task. Even if you do get the desired boost from one of the nutritional remedies mentioned, it's still critical to consider other possible factors contributing to fatigue. These can include chronic pain, stress, sleep deprivation, anemias, hypothyroidism, hypoadrenalism, specific nutritional deficiencies or excesses, liver congestion, food allergies or hypersensitivities, and undiagnosed diseases such as chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Fibromyalgia.

Still can't seem to get into gear? Request a copy of "Self Test Surveys," a listing of questionnaires and assessment tools to help identify just what it is, and "Get the Energy Edge," the top-ten life-style tips for updating your energy budget.

Karl J. Mincin is a clinical nutritionist specializing in nutrition assessment, the process of evaluating individual nutrient needs. He operates Nutrition Resource, a specialty vitamin and herb store and professional counseling service.