

Simple Tips for True Energy Boosters.

It's common to want a little pick-me-up to boost performance or alertness for the afternoon at work or perhaps keep you stoked for an action game or exercise routine.

There are many different snacks and drinks promising quick energy that are marketed to us on a daily basis. Some may leave you feeling drained in a short time. Here are some tips that will help you choose snacks wisely for the greatest benefit.



Nutritious foods can be fun and delicious

What's better, an energy bar or drink for a quick pick-me-up?

Go for the bar. Most energy drinks contain caffeine, sugar and little else, which means your boost will be short lived. Select a bar with as few ingredients as possible—Kind® bars and Larabar® are good choices since they're mostly made of fruit and nuts. Better yet, grab a handful of trail mix, which has the perfect energizing combo of healthy fats and protein (nuts) plus carbs (fruit and granola).

Energy drinks are packed full of empty calories and their increasing popularity is a source of concern which continues to grow. Many young people do not appear to be knowledgeable of the potentially harmful effects that over-consuming these drinks can have. Several side effects such as headaches, nervousness, tremors and even insomnia are common. If, combined with alcohol, which is encouraged by many bars, energy drinks can have harmful or even deadly effects. This is because when the two are combined the heart rate becomes accelerated and raises your arterial blood level. Another huge concern is that it can mask the effects of alcohol which lead the person to take risks such as driving.



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Extra Energy Snacks



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Eat for Extra Oomph



High energy healthy snacks are best

Food is your body's main source of energy fuel, but the wrong choice can leave you foggy, groggy and exhausted.

Energy Buster: Sugar Substitutes. Your body can't digest low calorie sugar substitutes, including mannitol, sorbitol and xylitol. They can cause stomach distress like bloating and gas, which are major energy drainers.

Limit sugar-free gum. Not only does it often contain a sugar alcohol, but the act of chewing gum can cause you to swallow air-another cause of gas and bloating.

Add healthy fat. Avocados, nuts, olive oil and other healthy fats keep your digestive system running smoothly, making bloating less likely while giving long lasting energy.

Avoid Processed Foods

Energy Buster: Processed foods. A chocolate chip muffin or bag of chips will deliver a fast jolt, but processed foods run through your system quickly, which means your energy spikes, then slumps fast.

Less is more. Eat whole foods as often as possible (fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, whole grains) and opt for the least processed versions of processed foods, which have the shortest ingredients list. When it comes to pasta and bread, the longest lasting energy boost means whole grains are first on the ingredients list.

Never eat sugar alone. Save the occasional candy bar, licorice whip or other sweet treat for after a meal that contains protein and fat, which will slow your body's absorption of sugar and prevent sharp ups and downs.



Fresh fruits provide a great source of long lasting energy

Energy Buster: Water shortage

When you're dehydrated, blood volume decreases and less oxygen is available to your vital muscles and organs, which make you feel worn down.

Drink a 6-oz. glass of water with every meal. And enjoy strawberries, cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple or watermelon for breakfast. These high in H₂O fruits will help ensure that you don't start the day at a deficit.

Pass on a late nightcap. Not only is alcohol dehydrating, it disrupts your sleep if you drink it 3 or 4 hours before bed.

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