

10 Keys to Increase Energy and Weight loss



Hydration

We all know that water is essential for our survival. Everyday your body loses water through urine and sweat. This fluid needs to be replenished, for while you can survive for weeks—even months—without food, without water you wouldn't last more than a few days. If you get the fluid/water replacement issue right, then you have made one of the most important and powerful steps you can in taking control of your health.

According to Dr. Mercola, licensed physician, surgeon and best selling author, your body is equipped with a mechanism that tells you when you need to replenish your water supply, and there's a simple way to gauge whether or not you need to drink more water even though you may not be feeling thirsty.

Since your body is capable of telling you its needs, using thirst as a guide to how much water you need to drink is one way to help ensure that your hydration needs are met.

The color of your urine will also help you determine whether or not you might need to drink more. As long as you are not taking riboflavin (vitamin B2, also found in most multi-vitamins), which fluoresces and turns your urine bright yellow, then your urine should be a very light yellow. If it is a deep, dark yellow then you are likely not drinking enough water. If your urine is scant or if you haven't urinated in several hours, that too is an indication that you're not drinking enough. (Based on the results from a few different studies, a healthy person urinates on average about seven or eight times a day.)

Remember to answer your thirst with pure water though, rather than sodas, coffee, or sugary fruit juices. Both Coffee and sodas are high in caffeine, which acts as a diuretic that will dehydrate you even further. Worse yet, sodas, fruit juices and other sweetened beverages are primary sources of fructose, which will only deteriorate your health.

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Stop the Cardio Madness

The correct form of exercise is the difference between having lack-luster results and achieving desired weight-loss and energy. Interval training (training that includes both periods of high and low intensity) boosts metabolism significantly longer than a steady workout of equal or even greater length (for example, a 20-minute workout of alternating high/low-intensity periods burns more calories than a 20-minute workout of steady intensity). Interval training also builds lean muscle tissue faster than sustained, high intensity training.

It is important to push the body to maximum effort to achieve muscle fatigue and maximum oxygen use. The harder muscles work, the more oxygen they require. This is measured relative to one's VO2 max, which is the highest amount of oxygen your body consumes during exercise. Working your body close to its VO2 max triggers the after-burn effect, where the body continues to consume oxygen and burn calories up to 48 hours after the workout. Studies show that 27 minutes of interval training 3x/week produces the same anaerobic and aerobic improvements as 60 minutes of cardio 5x/week.

A great example of this type of workout is the Sprint 8. It is called Sprint 8 because if you graph your heart rate, you will see that it peaks eight times during the workout. This technique is exponentially superior to regular cardio workouts and you're doing yourself a great disservice if you ignore it. The nice thing about Sprint 8 exercises is that you can perform them with many types of exercise; with or without equipment. So, while having access to a gym or exercise equipment will provide you with a larger variety of options, you don't require either. You can just as easily perform Sprint 8 by walking or running.

Another benefit is in the time it will save you. Instead of doing an hour-long cardio workout, you'll be done in 20 minutes or so. The actual sprinting totals only 4 minutes! Keep in mind, though, that you should only do Sprint 8 exercises once or twice a week. If you do it more frequently than that, you may do more harm than good.

The key to performing Sprint 8 exercises properly is to raise your heart rate to your anaerobic threshold. Keep pushing at maximum effort for 20 to 30 seconds, and then rest for 90 seconds. Repeat this cycle for a total of eight repetitions.

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Catch Some ZZZs

You can actually sleep your way to weight-loss. An analysis by researchers at Columbia University found that people who sleep less than seven hours per night are heavier, gain more weight over time, and have a harder time losing weight! If you're trying to slim down or shape up, hitting the sack is just as important as sweating at the gym. Not only do you have more energy to take on the day after a good night's sleep, but your body also torches calories, even when you're not working out.

A study from the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that normal sleepers' resting energy expenditure—the amount of calories burned when you're not moving—was five percent higher than their tired counterparts. They also burned 20% more calories after a meal versus sleep-deprived people. To top it off, sleep encourages portion control and reduces cravings! In a Swedish study, well-rested and sleep-deprived participants were asked to complete a computerized "ideal portion size" task where they could manipulate their serving size on a screen. Their findings: Sleep-starved people added 35 additional calories in snacks to their digital "plate" compared to well-rested participants.

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Narrow Your Eating Window to 8 Hours

Fasting, it turns out, has a number of health benefits that most people seek: from improved cardiovascular health and reduced cancer risk, to gene repair and longevity. In short, part of what appears to be driving disease processes is the fact that we're eating too frequently. When you're in constant "feast mode," your body actually forgoes much of its natural repair and rejuvenation programming.

It's true that severe calorie restriction promotes both weight loss and longevity in animal models, but this kind of "starvation diet" is not a very appealing strategy for most people. However, newer research shows that you can get most if not all of the same benefits of severe calorie restriction through intermittent fasting.

Fasting is historically commonplace as it has been a part of spiritual practice for millennia. But modern science has confirmed that there are many good reasons for fasting, including the following:

Normalizing your insulin and leptin sensitivity, and boosting mitochondrial energy efficiency: One of the primary mechanisms that makes intermittent fasting so beneficial for health is related to its impact on your insulin sensitivity. Intermittent fasting helps reset your body to use fat as its primary fuel, and mounting evidence confirms that when your body becomes adapted to burning fat instead of sugar as its primary fuel, you dramatically reduce your risk of chronic disease.

Normalizing ghrelin levels, also known as "the hunger hormone" Promoting human growth hormone (HGH) production: HGH is also a fat-burning hormone, which helps explain why fasting is so effective for weight loss

Lowering triglyceride levels and improving other biomarkers of disease

Reducing oxidative stress: Fasting decreases the accumulation of oxidative radicals in the cell, and thereby prevents oxidative damage to cellular proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids associated with aging and disease.

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Intermittent fasting is by far the most effective way I know of to shed unwanted fat and eliminate your sugar cravings. Since most of us are carrying excess fat we just can't seem to burn, this is a really important benefit. When sugar is not needed as a primary fuel, your body will also not crave it as much when your sugar stores run low.

How do you do this? What I recommend is to simply restrict your daily eating to a specific window of time, such as an eight-hour window. I have experimented with different types of scheduled eating for the past three years, and this is my personal preference as it's really easy to comply with once your body has shifted over from burning sugar to burning fat as its primary fuel.

Fat, being a slow-burning fuel, allows you to keep going without suffering from the dramatic energy crashes associated with sugar. And, if you're not hungry, well, then not eating for several hours is no big deal! You do this everyday until your insulin/leptin resistance improves (weight, blood pressure, cholesterol ratios, or diabetes normalizes). Then you continue to do it as often as you need to maintain your healthy state. I used a six-hour window until I was burning fat for fuel, and now eat in a nine- to ten-hour window, and will snack on macadamia nuts during that period. I rarely eat anything for four or more hours before going to bed.

Compliance is always a critical factor in any of these approaches and it seems that this is one of the easiest intermittent fasting schedules to implement. It really is beyond amazing to me how the food cravings literally disappear once you have regained your ability to burn fat for fuel. You don't need iron willpower or enormous levels of self-discipline to maintain this eating schedule. Yes, you will get hungry, but your hunger will be appropriate and you will be surprised at how much less food will completely satisfy you once you regain your metabolic flexibility and no longer need to rely on stored sugar in your body for your primary fuel.

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You're Sweet Enough... Keep Sugars Out!

While most of us on a weight loss mission concentrate on lowering fats, many of us fail to consider the role that refined sugar plays in our diets and in contributing to our growing waistlines. It is important to understand and know that while exercise is important and crucial for weight loss—and I am a major fan—the foods that you choose to eat are **THREE** times more important for controlling your weight than exercise is. It's very easy to sabotage yourself with sugary foods and exercise beverages but simple sugars on their own have no nutritional value (no vitamins, minerals, etc). Large amounts of refined sugar are often hidden in many of the foods and drinks we consume every day without us even knowing it. Although many of us think of sugar as being a relatively simple concept, the fact is that sugars can be quite complicated to understand. On food labels sugar can be listed as brown sugar, palm sugar, cane sugar, corn syrup, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, glucose (dextrose), high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, (table) sugar (sucrose), and syrup.

Negative effects of sugar:

- Causes our bodies to begin storing & stop burning fat
- Can cause an insulin drop (following a surge), which can leave us feeling tired and hungry (usually for something else very sweet)
- Suppresses the immune system
- Upsets the body's mineral balance
- Contributes to hyperactivity, anxiety and depression
- Causes kidney damage
- Decreases Energy
- Increases the risk of coronary heart disease
- Interferes with the absorption of calcium and magnesium
- Contributes to diabetes
- Contributes to osteoporosis
- Causes food allergies
- Increases fluid retention

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Conquer Stress

We all know that our lives have grown increasingly stressful in the last decades. Mentally, we are pulled in so many directions, trying to balance work, family and personal time. Chemically, we are exposed to more toxins, pollutants, drugs, and carcinogens than ever before. Physically, we have become sedentary due to the nature of our jobs and our busy lifestyles that make it hard to incorporate physical activity. Repetitive postures and actions we do every day create stress in our joints and spine, affecting our quality of life. Needless to say, we all experience and will continue to experience stress on a daily basis, therefore, managing it is crucial to your health, your energy and, yes, your weight!

For various scientifically proven reasons, stress can increase your risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, anxiety, sleeping disorders, obesity, ADHD, depression, cancer, and chronic infections, to name a few. It is known as the silent killer!

Physical Solutions: Physical activity must become a part of your life. If you don't use it, you lose it. Start doing yoga, pilates or going to an aerobic class with a friend. Include your family and go for regular hikes or walks in your neighborhood. Chiropractic removes physical stress from the spine, allowing your nervous system to be healthier. Consider having your nervous system checked by a chiropractor.

Chemical Solution: Lets keep it simple. Eat foods that once had a pulse and grew from the ground. Eliminate all packaged foods and stay away from the middle aisles in your local food store. When it comes to meats, look for grass fed, organic and free range. Eat vegetables and fruits that are in season and organic whenever possible. Avoid fish contaminated with mercury. Stay away from GMOs and think about reducing dairy and gluten in your diet!

Mental Solutions: In order to deal with mental stress, you need to be able to step away from that stress. One of the best ways to accomplish this is through exercise and meditation. Constantly thinking about what is stressful creates more stress. One of my favorite ways to manage stress is the hour of power. The hour of power is performed in the morning, 30-60 minutes earlier than your normal wake-up time. This is when I exercise, read something inspirational, or look at my personal, family and business goals and at my vision board for inspiration. This is also a great time to meditate.

Every time you hit the snooze button, you are saying "NO" to your energy and goals and "YES" to someone else's! Do not check emails during your hour of power. How you start your day is how you will end your day. Make mornings a sacred ritual!

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Give your life a little direction

In order to reduce stress in your life, you need to know who you are and what you want to be, do, and have. Goal setting is the best way to pave the path to your success. I have spent considerable time, energy, and money in order to become a better master of my destiny. Here is what I have learned over the years. I suggest that you dedicate at least one day at the end of the year to create your master plan for the year to come. Write down five goals that you want to accomplish in your personal and family life as well as your career. If you are married, get together with your spouse to discuss your yearly family goals. As a business owner, I always get together with my team in December to discuss the year and map out the following one. As for our personal yearly goals, my wife and I typically find time alone while on a vacation to think about what we want to accomplish in the year to come. No matter how and when you do it, the key is to have five yearly personal, family and career goals prior to the beginning of the year.

What you need to do next is extremely important. Every quarter, you are going to break your yearly goals into bite-size chunks called quarterly goals. Again, five is a good number in terms of quarterly personal, family and career goals. Make sure that all quarterly goals, when achieved, will bring you closer to accomplishing your yearly goals. I suggest writing your five personal, family and career goals on a small card and reviewing them during your hour of power in the morning. Every quarter, review the quarter that just ended and set your next quarterly goals.

Make sure that all goals are S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time sensitive. When you have clarity on what you want in life, you become more hopeful and energized. You also become more focused and less likely to waste time doing something that does not align with your goals. Remember, if you don't plan your life, someone else will. Get planning!

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Delegate, Delegate, Delegate

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to meet a brilliant man by the name of Dr. John Demartini. One of the things he thought me was the importance of knowing your values and living according to them. I encourage you to sit down in a quiet area and think about what you value in life. Take a second to realize how and where you spend your time. Take a look at the books you read, what you buy, and what inspires and motivates you. You will soon be able to identify your top five values.

Once you have your top five values, spend a week mapping out all your activities and tracking how much time you spend doing them. The results may shock you. You will probably realize that the majority of your time is spent doing things outside of your top five values. This is the reason why many people go through depression, burn out, and fall into a life void of any passion and inspiration.

One of the craziest things I decided to do after my time study is create a stop-to-do list. That's right. You are probably well aware of a to-do list, but many times that list contains stuff that is depressing and brings on anxiety every time you look at it. Once I had established my top five values and realized that I was not spending enough time on those values, I made a list of things I wanted to stop doing and delegate to someone else. This inevitably freed up my schedule and allowed me to spend more time with my family and doing things I really valued.

If you are still not sure about your values, a great way to know what they are is to look at the things you love to do, are quick to accomplish and make you feel great about yourself. The things you procrastinate about, make you feel anxious and never seem to come off your to-do list are definitely not high on your value list. These are the things you eventually want to delegate.

Whether it's delegating cleaning your house, mowing the lawn, or maybe painting your house, making room on your schedule for high value stuff is the key to personal fulfillment, increase energy and a contagious passion. Live life to the fullest and do the things that increase your self-worth. Remember that for everything you wish to delegate, there is someone out there who will value doing it for you!

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Avoid fad diets

I am sure that you or someone you know has either attempted or has been tempted to try one of the popular fad diets. While most of them come with convincing marketing and infomercials, few, if any, create healthy, sustainable results. Here are the three top reasons why fad diets should be avoided.

Dehydration: The main reason people decide to try these fad diets is the promise of a rapid weight loss. However, is this weight loss healthy? Why does it happen? There is no magic behind the significant weight loss associated with high-protein, and low-carbohydrate diets. When the body is not consistently receiving a supply of carbohydrates, glycogen is moved out of the liver and muscles in order to supply the body's cells with the energy they need to function.

As this lack of carbohydrate intake persists and the body's glycogen stores become depleted, ketone bodies are produced from fat in order to continue providing energy to various cells and fueling the brain. These two metabolic processes happen in order for your body to cope with this period of starvation and, unfortunately, both result in the loss of water. As you may already be aware, the rapid initial weight loss associated with these fad diets is largely due to significant amount of water that is expelled from the body and not fat loss!

Poor Health: On top of dehydration, studies have indicated that low-fat, high-protein and low-carbohydrate dieters frequently complain of headaches, constipation and fatigue. This is not surprising as fruits as well as certain vegetables are scarcely consumed in low-carbohydrate and high-protein diets. This unbalanced eating pattern fails to provide the body with the long-term adequate nutrients and energy it needs for healthy functioning. High-protein diets put a large amount of stress on the kidneys and increase calcium excretion that can eventually lead to the formation of kidney stones. In an effort to make up for the calcium that is leaving the body, calcium starts to be mobilized from the bones, which can in turn contribute to the development of osteoporosis.

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Weight Gain: Research has shown that the overall compliance rates with fad diets are quite poor over the long-term. Regardless of encouraging weight loss results, depriving the body of major food groups cannot be sustained for a prolonged period of time before nutritional deficiencies occur. In addition to the negative health impacts associated with poor nutritional status, deficiency can also cause cravings for certain foods and eventually lead to binge eating. Furthermore, fad diets can significantly disrupt the metabolism, which adapts to surviving on fewer calories and a limited variety of foods. When fad dieters eventually revert back to their usual eating habits, weight gain becomes virtually inevitable and rapid as their metabolism struggles to adjust. More importantly, at the end of this dietary roller coaster, fad dieters still do not have a clear understanding of the problematic eating habits that caused the weight gain to begin with.

Without a positive lifestyle change involving healthy dietary habits, it is next to impossible to obtain sustained and long-term weight loss. Instead of seeking a quick fix that will lead you back to where you started, stick to the tried-and-true method of enjoying a variety of wholesome foods, watching portion sizes and, of course, incorporating physical activity and stress management techniques into your daily routine. These three steps are the key to maintaining weight loss, high energy and a healthy body for life.

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Experiment with Superfoods

Superfoods enhance everything you already do to be healthy. Most superfoods are widely available today and contain nutrients known to enhance longevity, energy, and weight loss, and are backed by peer-reviewed, scientific studies.

They are loaded with phytonutrients—non-vitamin, non-mineral components in food that provide health benefits. They are proven to help prevent and reverse aging, cardiovascular disease, type I & II diabetes, hypertension, certain cancers, dementia, arthritis, allergies, fatigue, fibromyalgia, and insomnia, and to extend your life span.

The key with these superfoods is to be creative and add them to an already healthy and nutritious diet. Look at mixing some of these in your salads and shakes or simply having them as snacks. When it comes to superfoods, there are no rules. Buy them raw and organic when possible and let your imagination find a place for them in your everyday life! Here is my top 21 superfood list:

- Goji Berries
- Cocoa
- Maca.
- Bee Products
- Spirulina
- Blue Green Algae
- Marine Phytoplankton
- Aloe Vera
- Hempseed
- Coconut Oil
- Blueberries
- Broccoli
- Oats
- Salmon
- Spinach
- Avocados
- Oranges
- Pumpkin
- Tomatoes
- Walnuts
- Acai

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