

[IMAGE]

## Fatigue Fighters: 4 Great Ways to Stay Energized

By Editorial Staff

Whether you're a night owl enjoying the social scene until early morning; a compulsive couch potato destined to watch the boob tube until the clock strikes midnight (or beyond); a parent – new or seasoned – struggling to find enough time in the day to relax, much less sleep; or an overworked, overstressed office worker resigned to daily desk doldrums, fatigue is something we all fight on a daily basis. For some, all that's required is a few extra hours of sleep a night; for too many others, it requires changing your behavior permanently to make relaxation the priority and put fatigue on notice. Here are five ways to fight fatigue and improve your mental and physical health:

1. *Put your body in motion:* Regular exercisers understand that the secret to long-term energy actually comes from *expending* energy through exercise. Counter-intuitive to non-exercisers and even new exercisers, of course, but a simple strategy for building energy that lasts throughout the day. Not only does the act of exercising naturally “wake you up” from your fatigue-draining day, but it also encourages the production of endorphins, chemicals that reduce pain perception and improve mood. What's more, the more muscle you build and the higher your metabolism, the more your body can handle the demands of your busy day – giving you more energy to get out there and show off your great physique.
2. Fatigue - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark *Eat to win:* This is an easy one when it comes to energy production, but unfortunately, it's ignored on an ever-increasing basis. Fast foods, processed snacks and nutrition-deficient meals not only provide short-term energy that quickly fades, leaving you fatigued – not to mention hungry, which can lead to overeating and weight gain (a definite energy-sapper); the sugar and fat content of many of the foods Americans commonly eat also “weigh us down,” literally and figuratively, draining us of our physical ability (and mental desire) to do anything except lie down and take a nap. In short, our eating habits are a recipe for disaster when it comes to staying energized. The solution is straightforward: Replace some of those burgers and shakes with nutrient-dense fruits, veggies, whole grains and lean proteins that provide your body with an all-day source of energy.
3. *Get into a sleep rhythm:* Research suggests that the amount of sleep you get is less important than the

regularity and quality of sleep when it comes to proper restoration / rejuvenation. That means if you get eight hours of sleep a night, but it's interrupted by barking dogs, crying babies or countless trips to the bathroom, there's a good chance you'll be fighting fatigue more than the person who only gets six hours a night, but does so in peaceful, uninterrupted fashion. What's more, timing is pivotal when it comes to sleep: go to bed at about the same time every night (and wake up at about the same time every morning) and you'll find yourself more refreshed and energized than if your sleep schedule varies widely.

4. *Get away:* Pure and simple, if you never have a chance to relax and restore your energy levels, you'll gradually wear down until the meter's on empty. Whether it's taking a few vacations away from the office – and the city you live in – every year; reserving 15-20 minutes a day to read a good book, soak in the bath or just take a walk and process your day; or reminding yourself that the paperwork on your desk can wait until tomorrow, keep your energy levels high by making some *you* time to remind yourself that life is great – and so much more rewarding when you've got the energy to enjoy it.

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