



High-Energy Living

Most people would agree that a high level of energy for work, family needs, and recreation enhances the quality of life. Some people naturally seem to bubble with energy. How can you tap into that energy and feel vibrant throughout the day, being more effective and finding more enjoyment? After you've done all you *have* to do, wouldn't you like energy left over for what you *want* to do?

Lifestyle choices can have an impact on your energy level. Choose habits that fuel the body with energy and avoid those that zap energy. Check out the ideas below and see where you can tap into high-energy living.

Six Small Meals

Eating small frequent meals helps to keep your blood sugar level optimal. You provide your body with the fuel it needs in small bursts. A large meal can zap your energy by causing blood to flow to your digestive system, making less oxygen and fuel available to your energy-producing cells.

Avoid Sweets

After surgery, most gastric bypass patients do not tolerate added sugars except in the smallest quantity. Choosing foods and beverages with added sugars (more than 2 grams per serving) usually results in dumping syndrome. These flu-like symptoms are a definite energy zapper. Over time many gastric bypass patients find that they are not as sensitive to added sugars and have an improved tolerance to them. Those having a gastric sleeve or adjustable gastric band can consume sugars without the ill effects. Some adopt the attitude, "If the sugars don't make me sick, why shouldn't I eat them?" Not only do sweets promote cavities and provide calories with few vitamins or minerals, but also they often cause wild swings in energy levels. What occurs when you eat a sugar-laden food is a rapid rise in your blood sugar level. This may result in a temporary state of higher energy. Your body responds to this high level of blood sugar by releasing insulin. The result is often a low blood sugar level. This is where the lower energy level comes from. You may also feel hungry and crave more sweets or overeat at the next meal.

Limit Caffeine

Caffeine can give you an energy boost. The only problem is that your body comes to depend on the caffeine. Your body may require increasing amounts to obtain the same energy level. If you don't meet or exceed that amount, you develop headaches and a sluggish feeling. If you choose to consume caffeine, be sure to avoid it later in the day so it does not interfere with a good night's sleep.

Regular Exercise

Regular exercise allows your body to become more efficient at carrying oxygen and nutrients to its cells. The chemical reactions that occur enhance your energy level and

your mood while decreasing stress levels. What an awesome energy booster! Studies have shown that exercise allows you to be more efficient. You feel better and accomplish more with your day. Walking, biking, dancing, or other movement is an investment of time and energy that pays off in a big way.

Keep Up On Vitamin/Mineral Supplements

Deficiency in any essential nutrient will cause your body to function at less than optimal performance. Choose a variety of healthful foods and take the recommended vitamin and mineral supplements daily to ensure adequate intake. If you had a gastric bypass or gastric sleeve, remember to have lab tests every three months for the first year and annually thereafter to identify any deficiencies that may occur.

Decrease Stress

A certain amount of stress is helpful and healthful, but when stress levels get too high the body begins to suffer. Some life stressors are not under our control. Finding healthful ways of dealing with these stressors is your best bet to minimize the effects on the body.

- Do something physical--take a walk, plant a garden, paint a room, repair a deck.
- Talk about it with a trusted friend.
- Pray--more and more scientific studies are linking prayer with healing and a sense of peace.
- Take time to pamper yourself in healthful ways: a candlelit bath, a dinner at your favorite restaurant, a show.

Most stressors are well within our control if we are totally honest about it. You can remedy an unfulfilling job by looking for different work or by taking classes to help you redirect your career path. You can balance the demands of work and home by requiring family members to contribute more, arranging a flexible work schedule, and learning to live more simply. Take an honest look at the stressors in your life. How could you rearrange things to make life less pressured and more enjoyable?

Limit Alcohol

Using alcohol to relax and escape from life's stresses may appear to be effective, but any temporary relief from stress is short lived because nothing has been done to change the underlying causes of the stress. Alcohol is a depressant, which zaps energy and B vitamins from your body. Alcohol is absorbed through the stomach walls. The process is much quicker in people who have had gastric exclusion surgery, because their stomach walls are so close together.

Maintain a Positive Attitude

This quotation by author Charles Swindoll sums up the importance of a positive attitude:

“Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitudes toward life. The longer I live the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent of what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it. Attitude is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than what people do or say. It is more

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important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have and that is our attitude.”

Sleep

Adequate sleep is essential for good health and high-energy living. Find the amount of sleep that feels right to you and strive to sleep that amount each night. Short naps may help to revive energy, while longer naps may leave you feeling even more groggy and tired. Playing catch up on sleep doesn't often work well either, although sleeping an hour later than normal on occasion is a wonderful indulgence.

Limit TV

TV watching is a major energy zapper. Not only does it slow your metabolism to a crawl, but it also robs you of time for more energy-enhancing activities.