

# Avoiding the afternoon slump



Do you often feel tired and worn out after lunch? It can be hard to stay productive and get through the workday if you're fighting fatigue and exhaustion. Often times, this afternoon slump can be avoided by making a few simple changes:

- **Use caffeine sparingly.** A cup of coffee or tea can give you a boost in the morning, but drinking too much can cause an energy crash after it wears off. Finish your last caffeinated drink before noon, and limit intake to four 8 oz. cups of coffee.
- **Include lean protein and healthy fats in your lunch.** This can help stabilize blood sugar levels and fight fatigue. Examples include turkey, low-fat dairy, avocado, nuts and fish.

- **Drink plenty of water.** Even mild dehydration can make you tired. Aim for eight 8 oz. glasses per day.
- **Get moving.** If you can, walk outside at lunch and get fresh air, even for just 10 minutes. This can energize and relax you. But even walking indoors or stretching in your office can be helpful. Sitting at a desk for hours without getting up can make you feel tired. Do alternative activities and walk around when you can.
- **Having more energy starts the day before.** If you find that you're tired every day despite these tips, you may need more sleep. Aim for 7 to 9 hours a night.

Sometimes, ongoing fatigue can be a sign of a health issue. If you find that your energy levels are always low despite making healthy choices, talk to your doctor. Problems such as sleep disorders, anemia, depression, diabetes, and many other conditions can cause energy levels to sag. Certain medications can also cause sleepiness. You and your doctor can discuss your health history and make a plan to address any issues to get you feeling better again.