

ONE DEGREE UNDER?

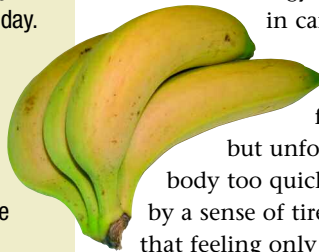


How are you going to get that degree if you're always exhausted? Try these top tips for wellbeing by Melody Mackeown. Melody was at Southampton University where she read Biochemistry, and then at Bristol where she gained a degree in Psychology. She is now about to take her final Diploma in Nutritional Therapy.

TRY THESE TOP TIPS

1. It may be boring to say it yet again, but don't skip breakfast! It's key in balancing your blood sugar levels.
2. Have three meals a day, and in between, two healthy snacks if you're still hungry...for example, if you're in the Uni hockey team!
3. Drink plenty of filtered water. Try and manage at least 6-8 glasses a day.
4. Get yourself familiar with wholegrains...like oats, corn, rye and millet as well as that old friend, rice.
5. Learn to like beans, lentils, pulses, nuts and seeds...they're good sources of protein, and integrate them with lean (preferably organic) animal protein like chicken, turkey and oily fish. If fresh salmon, cod and halibut are too pricey, go for tinned mackerel or sardines. You can't be too exhausted to open a tin!
6. Use good quality cold pressed oil if you can - for example, olive oil, sunflower oil, sesame or walnut.
7. Avoid the following if you can, or at least make your best effort. Stimulants like tea, coffee, fizzy and canned drinks, chocolate, alcohol (and of course, cigarettes!)
8. Find a form of exercise that you enjoy, and try and do it for at least 20 minutes three times a week. Swimming, walking and cycling are good.
9. Wind down! Take time at regular times during the day to relax and manage your stress levels, especially at mealtimes.

Parties and more parties...PMS and exam stress...pubbing and clubbing....staying out all night on Friday, and having to catch up on work on Saturday before going to that gig...I remember it all too well from my times at Southampton and Bristol. You're probably knackered half the time like I was, and wonder how you're going to last the course. Don't worry. You don't have to read a degree in Nutrition to keep your energy levels up and running. It's easier than you think to manage your health!



First, a basic fact which you probably already know - energy is fuelled by glucose, a type of sugar found in carbohydrate foods.

Carbohydrates can be divided into two groups. Simple carbohydrates can be found in things like bread, pasta and cakes, but unfortunately these release glucose into the body too quickly, giving you a rush of energy followed by a sense of tiredness or 'burnout'. You probably know that feeling only too well.

Far more preferable are complex carbohydrates, as they contain more complex sugars which take longer to break down into glucose, and therefore sustain your energy for longer. Good examples include oats, rye bread and wholewheat pasta.

The other good way to increase your energy and vitality is to look for 'whole' foods that are high in fibre, rather than refined foods. Good whole foods include brown rice, and wholemeal bread rather than the white stuff, as well as most green and colourful vegetables. And, if you combine high fibre foods alongside carbohydrates, this will help to slow down the release of sugars, and also provide a good source of protein to help even out your blood sugar levels.



Most fruits are also good sources of fibre, but a lot contain fruit sugar (a slow releasing form known as 'fructose'). The best choices for energy include grapes, pineapples, watermelons, apples, pears and bananas, and the last three are best combined with fibre foods such as oats - a terrific breakfast choice.



Finally, in order to turn glucose into energy, the body uses enzymes that depend on a good supply of vitamins, which must be absorbed from the digestive tract. The most important are the B vitamins, including folic acid, vitamin C and some minerals. The best all round sources of these can be found simply by eating lots of fresh vegetables, and preferably raw or steamed. You can even save your energy by not bothering to cook! **A**



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