

## Why Am I So Tired After Eating?

Eating a snack or meal should leave you feeling refueled and energized. Many people often wonder why they instead feel fatigued and ready to take a nap. What you eat, when you eat, and how often you eat all play a big part in how you feel overall. Making smart food choices can go a long way in keeping you feeling your best every day.

### Significance

It's true. What you put in your body has a direct impact on how your body functions and how you feel. Your body converts food into energy during the digestion process and in turn burns calories. How efficiently you burn calories is measured by your metabolism, which is your body's ability to convert food into energy. Both short term and long term health are determined, in part, by how you eat. When you eat a lot of junk or fast food, your energy levels drop significantly. There just isn't enough nutrition in these foods to keep you going.

### Considerations

Think of your metabolism as a blazing bonfire. When the fire is burning bright and hot, your metabolism is in full gear and your body is functioning optimally. As the fire begins to diminish, you need to add more fuel or food to the fire to keep it burning hot with a consistent flame. The more you let it diminish, the more it takes to get it going again, making it a constant battle to keep the fire lit.

Eating infrequently and loading your body up with carbohydrates, sugars, and bad fats when you do eat will weigh you down and have you "running on empty." Re-fueling with a balance of healthy carbohydrates, protein, fiber, and healthy fats will keep your body running like a well-oiled machine. You will be up for anything and your resistance will be strong, too.

### Misconceptions

There are many misconceptions about eating and energy. One is that certain foods, like Thanksgiving turkey, can make you tired. It is actually the amino acid l-tryptophan that raises serotonin levels and calms you that makes you feel that way.

Another is that eating sugar will give you a quick "sugar rush." The rush or energy boost you experience is actually your body reacting to and processing high levels of refined sugar. This energy is short lived and very soon after you will crash.

Finally, drinking caffeine will give you more energy. This is only temporary because caffeine is a stimulant that affects the central nervous system. It will make you alert and focused temporarily but it doesn't last. Eventually your body needs more of it over time.

## **Benefits**

Eating small frequent healthy meals throughout the day will have immediate positive results on your body. You will have the ability to sustain a consistent level of energy all day long. You'll find that your mind is more focused and that you can easily multi-task and make decisions easily. If you are trying to lose weight, your metabolism will fire up and help you burn more calories throughout the day. It will be easier to maintain a desired weight without skipping meals. You will also be proactively protecting yourself from many health issues because your blood sugar levels will be more balanced.

## **Prevention/Solution**

Follow these easy rules to guarantee that you will never feel tired after eating again:

1. Eat five to six small meals and snacks a day and avoid eating one or two big meals.
2. Don't let more than 2 - 3 hours lapse between meals and snacks.
3. Carry healthy snacks, like granola bars and fruit with you wherever you go so you are not caught in a situation where you can't get to food for a long time.
4. If you work out, eat a snack before and a meal after you work out to give your body what it needs to recover.
5. Eat a good breakfast that contains protein along with carbohydrates, fat, and fiber. Don't skip it!