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6 Simple Ways to Fight Fatigue



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By Sylvia Booth Hubbard | Sunday, 27 Dec 2015 06:36 PM

Holiday shopping, hosting and attending parties, extra cleaning and cooking, and all of the other activities that make the holiday season jolly can also leave merrymakers exhausted. Fatigue combines with stress to overwhelm your adrenal glands and to produce more of the stress hormone cortisol, which makes you feel even more exhausted.

Before you lose your holiday cheer, enlist these simple ways to fight fatigue:

- **Sniff peppermint oil.** Peppermint oil is a natural stimulant, and just sniffing a couple of drops sprinkled on a handkerchief can boost your energy levels. Numerous studies have found that peppermint oil decreases fatigue, soothes nerves, and sharpens memory. Tired and headachy? A randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind study published in the journal *The Neurologist*, found that topically applied peppermint oil was as effective in relieving headaches as 1,000 mg of acetaminophen.

- **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is another necessity that you may shortchange during the holidays, but getting a good night's sleep will keep your energy levels from dipping. If you've having trouble sleeping — and studies show that up to 56 percent of people have trouble sleeping during the holidays — try a "sleep cocktail." Some experts recommend taking 1,000 mg of vitamin C, 120 mg of magnesium citrate, and 1 mg of melatonin to help you to relax and drift off into a restful sleep.

If you need to grab an afternoon nap, take it. A brief 10 to 20 minute nap will leave you alert and boost your energy levels, but don't nap too long. During a brief nap, you only enter the lightest stage of sleep, but during a 30 or 60 minute nap your body will enter a deep level of sleep that may leave you feeling even more tired than before. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine suggests following a nap with a cup of coffee for an even bigger boost of energy.

- **Take ribose.** If you're feeling fatigued, Dr. Jacob Teitelbaum recommends ribose. Ribose is a type of sugar the body makes naturally from glucose, and is a part of the process that produces energy. Supplemental ribose, which can be purchased in health food stores and over the Internet, is a "healthy" sugar that will supercharge your energy production, says Dr. Teitelbaum author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!*

"Studies show you'll increase your energy by 61 percent in three weeks and reduce your pain," he tells Newsmax Health. He suggests taking 5 grams of ribose powder mixed with water three times a day for three weeks, and then reducing the dosage to twice a day.

- **Enjoy a massage.** "Massages release stress and reduce fatigue," marriage and relationship counselor Doris Wild Helmering tells Newsmax Health. Several studies show that massage reduces levels of stress-inducing cortisol while increasing the levels of stress-reducing serotonin and dopamine, slowing the heart rate and reducing blood pressure.

If you have back pain from decorating and lifting heavy packages, a massage may be a particularly good idea. Researchers at the Group Health Center for Health Studies in Seattle found that massages are particularly effective for back pain, working better even than chiropractic therapy or acupuncture.

- **Exercise.** You may be tempted to forgo your normal exercise regime during the holidays because you're feeling tired, but you'll be even more exhausted if you skip your regular exercise sessions. Aim for 30 minutes of activity every single day. Slip in sessions of yoga or Tai chi which combine gentle exercise with relaxation components. And when you feel your energy levels sagging during the day, add in 5 or 10 minutes of stretching, walking, dancing, singing, laughing...almost anything that gets your body in motion.

"Author Norman Cousins called laughter 'inner jogging,'" says Darrin Zeer, America's Relaxation Expert. "Laughing on a regular basis reduces stress hormone levels and increases health-enhancing hormones like endorphins," Zeer tells Newsmax Health.

• **Drink Water.** Simply drinking enough water can do wonders to keep energy levels from sagging. A study published in the *Journal of Nutrition* found that women who were dehydrated felt fatigued and experienced a loss of focus. They didn't have to be severely dehydrated to experience the effects, either. A decrease in hydration of only 1 percent below optimal was enough to cause symptoms. Take a bottle with you ... in your car, in your desk ... and sip throughout the day.

Traditionally, experts recommended drinking eight glasses of water a day, while some modern thinkers suggest you drink half your body weight in ounces every day. (If you weigh 150 pounds, for instance, you should drink 75 ounces of water a day.) If your urine is darker than the color of straw, you're probably not drinking enough water.