

Energy thief #2: Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS)

Chronic fatigue is a central player in today's female energy crisis, with as many as 8 million women currently suffering from CFS or its painful cousin fibromyalgia. Many doctors fail to recognize the condition, but Dr. Oz has stressed that CFS is real: "One of the best ways I can tell if someone has it is if they cannot sleep." The woman suffering from CFS is tired, and if she could sleep she'd feel better, he has explained. But she can't get the quality sleep that she'd need to recharge.

While there are as many theories about the nature and cause of CFS as there are pebbles in a creek (at least one has CFS is like saying they have a fever), referentea. The beneficial dose: One 5 Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of From Fatigued to Fantastic! (Avery, 2007) and frequent contributor to DoctorOz.com, believes the trouble starts with the hypothalamus. This brain structure governs sleep, as well as the function of the energy-regulating thyroid and adrenals. And it uses more energy for its size than almost any other body part. Factors such as stress, exposure to toxic chemicals, infection and poor nutrition increase your energy demand, but decrease your ability to make energy, explains Dr. Teitelbaum. "You then hit a point where your body blows a fusethat fuse is the hypothalamus."

One-QUIZ

COULD CFS BE STEALING YOUR ENERGY?

If you suffer from extreme fatigue and any of the following, ask your doctor about CFS.

- Exhaustion after even mild
- ✓ Brain fog/forgetfulness
- Body aches/joint pain
- ✓ Sore throat

Dr. Oz's DIY risk test: If you try to sleep but can't—or if sleep isn't refreshing—you may have CFS.

WHAT CAN HELP:

Switching to the energy sugar.

D-ribose is a sugar that helps the body generate ATP (adenosine triphosphate), which is responsible for shuttling energy between cells. Dr. Teitelbaum's research shows that CFS sufferers who take D-ribose daily sleep better and boost their energy by 61 percent within three weeks. According to Dr. Oz, "It's a very quick way to recharge your energy system." The powder, which is a third to half as sweet as table sugar, can be used instead of sugar in beverages, yogurt or smoothies-Dr. Oz stirs it into gram scoop three times daily for three weeks; then Dr. Teitelbaum advises dropping to 2 scoops daily as a maintenance dose. One to try: Corvalen

D-ribose (\$33 for 56 servings, at BetterHealthInternational.com).

Putting this on your tongue. A

"blown" hypothalamus can leave the adrenal glands, which are responsible for releasing the stress hormone cortisol, exhausted. That must be why Dr. Oz placed a dose of cordyceps on an audience member's tongue during a recent segment on his show. The medicinal mushroom extract is believed to make cells more efficient at using cortisol, so adrenals don't have to work as hard at producing the stress hormone and can get back to helping to energize. Cordyceps comes in tablet, capsule and liquid form (typically 15 to 30 drops on the tongue, once or twice daily). One to try: Eclectic Institute Cordyceps (\$18 for 2 oz., about a month's supply, at HerbsPro.com).

It worked for me

"My symptoms vanished within a week!"

"I could feel the weight of every limb of my body," Mary Watson tells FIRST. "Even taking a shower was taxing." When doctors couldn't pinpoint the problem, Mary decided to do her own research online and quickly homed in on CFS. Then she found an article explaining how D-ribose, a sugar the body produces naturally, can be extremely effective at easing symptoms, Mary raves, "Incredibly, within one week of taking it, I was looking forward to each day, rather than marking time until I could crawl back into bed."

Today Mary is logging 75-hour weeks with energy to spare. "I used to tell my husband, 'If my energy ever returns, I'll be dangerous!' Now I am. At work I just spearheaded our biggest fund-raiser ever-and I'm loving

every minute of it!"

sult a physician before taking any new supplement. Dr. Oz does not treat the women featured in this article. Dr. Teitelbaum treats only Mary Watson.





Dr. Oz tiredness special

Energy thief #3: Anemia

The idea of having too little oxygen coursing throughout the body may sound like an extreme health situation, but as Dr. Oz has explained, that's exactly what's happening to the estimated three in five women over 30 years old who suffer from iron-deficiency anemia. And those numbers might actually be low given that millions more suffer from conditions that place them at a high risk for the disease, including irritable bowel syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, high blood pressure and heavy periods.

Whatever the culprit behind the deficiency, the impact on energy is the same: "There just aren't enough red blood cells carrying all-important oxygen throughout the body, and this brings on major fatigue," explains Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D. "Think of it as not having enough trucks carrying oxygen to cells in your lungs, brain, muscles and other organs, to provide them with energy and take away cellular waste. You're not only tired because you're low on oxygen-it's also because waste is building up in every cell of the body."

WHAT CAN HELP:

Dusting off the iron skillet. Most women need between 8 and 15 mg of iron a day. (Most menstruating women should aim for the higher end of that range; those who are over 40 or on the Pill or HRT should aim for the lower end.) Since supplements can cause constipation, Dr. Oz has suggested cooking with an iron skillet, which will transfer some of the mineral into food. For example, scrambling an egg in an iron skillet boosts iron content from 1.4 to 4.7 mg while spaghetti sauce with meat goes from .7 to 3.6 mg per serving.

Consume more B vitamins. Folic acid and vitamin B₁₂ work in tandem with iron to build healthy red blood cells that can properly carry oxygen. Yet one in three women don't get enough folic acid, and as many as 84 percent of women over 40 could be low in vitamin B_{12} . The energizing solution: Aim for three daily servings of B12 and folic acid, both of which are found in liver, salmon, asparagus, black beans and collard greens. It may also help to take a daily B-vitamin complex.



"I haven't felt this alive since high school!"

Like clockwork, Patricia Tritt felt the fog of fatigue roll in, even though she'd just downed her third cup of coffee. I shouldn't need to nap this much, she worried as she gave in and climbed back into bed.

Patricia had been exhausted for most of her adult life. At first she figured it was how all busy moms felt. But when low energy forced her to guit her job, she knew it was time to see a doctor. Good thing she did: "My iron was so low, it wasn't even on the chart," she says.

Patricia started treating her severe anemia by taking supplements and eating more iron-rich whole foods. She also stopped relying on caffeine, which had been depleting her system of iron. "I couldn't believe how different I felt within two weeks," she says. "All my symptoms went away. Everything felt sunnier."

Patricia has used her newfound energy to start the business Supermarket Smarty, a grocerylist cheat sheet to help moms make healthy food choices. "I now get 50 percent more done each day," she raves. "My husband has known me since high school and he says he's never seen me with this much energy!"



Oneminute QUIZ

COULD ANEMIA BE TO BLAME FOR YOUR **EXHAUSTION?**

If you suffer from extreme tiredness and any of the following, ask your doctor about anemia.

- ✓ Light-headedness
- A racing heart or shortness of breath
- Frequent headaches
- Cold hands and feet
- Muscular weakness

Dr. Oz's DIY risk test: If your tongue or the inside of your lower eyelid is pale-like the color of a chicken cutlet in the freezer-you may be anemic.