

# 5 Elements of Eating for Energy

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Looking for ways to have more energy? You're not alone. Many of us depend on our morning coffee to face the day and some describe ebbing energy levels by late afternoon. If you find you're feeling worn out before the day is done, consider taking a good look at your diet.

### Basics of Energy

Think of energy in terms of currency: you need to possess it to spend it. The currency our body uses for energy is called calories. We get calories from the foods and beverages we eat and drink. Since we burn calories all the time, even while sleeping, we need to fuel ourselves daily with a steady diet of nutritious foods.

### How Do We Fuel Energy

We know that food is more than just a bundle of calories in an edible form. There are macronutrients, vitamins and other nutrients in there, too. All help in their own ways to give us energy.

1. Carbohydrates, Fats and Protein are called macronutrients, and are sources of dietary energy. While some foods may provide only one of these macronutrients, think of an apple which is mostly carbohydrate, most foods provide a mix of protein, fat and carbohydrate. Think of a vegetable salad with chickpeas and oil and vinegar dressing – that's a blend of all three!
2. Vitamins also play an important supporting role when it comes to energy metabolism. Just like cars don't depend on gasoline alone to run – they need oil, a clean engine and ongoing maintenance – B vitamins help convert food to energy so your body can run smoothly.

It isn't just the energy from food that helps you feel awake and fight fatigue. Your energy levels can be influenced by things outside of eating too, such as:

1. **Physical activity:** It's true that when you're engaging in physical activity, you're using up energy (burning calories). But over the long term, physical activity gets your heart rate up and helps your body work more efficiently, which ultimately leaves you with more energy to tackle your everyday life.
2. **Sleep:** Daily rest is part of your body's ongoing maintenance plan. As adults, we typically need 7 or 8 hours each night to recover and feel energized and ready for the day ahead.

## How to Have More Energy

Changing your diet may be an effective way to get more energy. Try these five simple tips to eat for energy:

1. **Concentrate on Carbohydrates.** Your body's preferred energy source is glucose, made from dietary carbohydrates. Foods with fibre and other complex carbohydrates like whole grains, vegetables and fruit will help keep your energy levels stable, avoiding sharp sugar
2. **Pay Attention to Protein.** Protein is an important nutrient for muscle health and to prevent age-related muscle loss. Unlike fat and carbohydrates, extra protein can't be stored in the body. That's why you need to replenish protein throughout the day, aiming for 20-35 grams at every meal. Meat, dairy and eggs are good sources of animal proteins, while beans, nuts and soy are plant-based protein options.
3. **Don't Forget Fats.** Fats are a main source of energy and are needed in the diet to absorb certain vitamins. Just remember that a little goes a long way, since fats are more concentrated sources of calories than carbohydrates and protein. Nuts, olive oil, avocados and fatty fish are all great sources of healthy fats.

4. **Remember B Vitamins.** While B vitamins don't provide energy themselves, they help our body unlock the energy found in carbohydrates, protein, and fat. If you're deficient in B vitamins, this can lead to tiredness and fatigue. The B vitamins most adults need to focus on are:

- Thiamin (B1)
- Riboflavin (B2)
- Niacin (B3)
- Folate (B9)
- Vitamin B6
- Vitamin B12

5. **Achieve Balance.** Having a healthy, balanced diet pattern is important for good health. If you are looking for a better understanding of what makes a diet “balanced”, check out Canada's Food Guide for healthy eating recommendations.

Did you know that each serving of BOOST® nutritional drinks provide nutrient-rich calories, high-quality protein and up to 27 vitamins and minerals, including B vitamins, to help convert food to energy and help fuel the body?

Eat for energy and choose the Boost® product that fits you.