



Wellness and Healthy Living Who's Caring for the Caregiver?

If you provide care for an aging or ill loved one, you know how demanding that role can be. Caring for your loved one while keeping up your home and work life is an especially tough balancing act. You may have trouble finding time for your own needs. This kind of prolonged stress can take a toll on your health and well-being. That's why it's so important to find ways to lower your stress and create some free time for yourself. Here are some tips:

Accept help with everyday tasks. You may have a hard time asking for help or feel guilty for doing so. You might be surprised by how willing friends and family are to pitch in. But don't expect them to know exactly what you need. Have a list ready of small tasks that anyone can help with. Even small things like help with groceries or yard care can go a long way toward relieving your stress.

Know what help is available. Your loved one may be eligible to get home health care or meal deliveries. There are also many nonprofit groups with the sole purpose of helping people with disabilities. Check with your loved one's insurance provider for more information about resources and services that may be available.

Take a break. If possible, take a few hours or more off from caregiving each week. Ask a trusted friend or relative, or hire a caregiving organization to give you a short-term break. Such help is called respite care.

Then follow these steps to help ensure the safest experience for your loved one while you're away:

- * Be sure you know the substitute caregiver's background. Make sure you can trust them to carry out the responsibilities that you're asking of them.
- * Be sure to leave them any legal paperwork and phone numbers they might need in an emergency.
- * Be sure they know every task that they will need to perform until you've returned.
- * Be sure they know exactly what medicine, if any, must be given and the right doses and times.
- * Give them clear, written instructions about feeding, medicine, emergency procedures, and all daily tasks.
- * Be sure they have all the contact information they will need to reach you while you're away.

It's not selfish to look out for your own needs. Prolonged caregiver stress can lead to burnout. When you are healthy and happy, you are more likely to deal with problems in a healthy way. You'll also be in a better place to care for the loved one who needs you.

Welcome to HEALTHYROADS!

In this monthly newsletter, you'll find a collection of articles on popular health and wellness topics. If you'd like additional support in your quest to lose weight, improve nutrition, develop an exercise plan, reduce stress, or quit smoking, visit us online at www.healthyroads.com. There you can find a collection of tools to help you reach your health goals.

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01

Wellness and Healthy Living
Who's Caring for the Caregiver?

02

Nutrition and Weight Management
Foods to Fight Fatigue

03

Active Living
Can't Do It All? Do a Little

04

Life Skills
Dining Out the Healthy Way

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02

Nutrition and Weight Management: Foods to Fight Fatigue

Do you often feel exhausted? Worn down? Burnt out? Fatigue is a common problem with many possible causes. First, talk with your doctor to see if an underlying health problem or a medicine you take may be to blame. If not, think about the habits you have that may be draining your energy. Too much stress and too little sleep are common culprits. So is a lack of exercise. But don't overlook the crucial role your diet may play.

Food is your body's fuel. The right kinds of food can give your body the energy it needs to keep running. Take complex carbs. These are foods like whole grains and starchy veggies, peas, and legumes. Your body breaks these down slowly. This gives you a steady supply of energy throughout the day. They also provide important vitamins, minerals, and fiber that your body needs to function.

Other whole foods, like fresh fruits, healthy fats, and lean protein, are just as important. Fats are another potent source of sustained energy. So too are fruits, which your body can break down quickly for fast energy. And protein helps build and repair your body. These foods are also packed with vitamins and minerals. A healthy eating plan that's a balanced mix of all of these foods can give your body the energy it needs all day long.

Junk food and processed, packaged foods, on the other hand, are often empty calories. They lack the nutrients your body needs. And they are often high in simple carbs, as well. They can be digested quickly, which may give you a burst of energy. But that's often followed by a rapid plunge. These foods are not a good source of steady and sustained energy. Relying too heavily on them can leave you feeling sluggish overall.

Here are a few other nutrition tips that may help you beat fatigue:

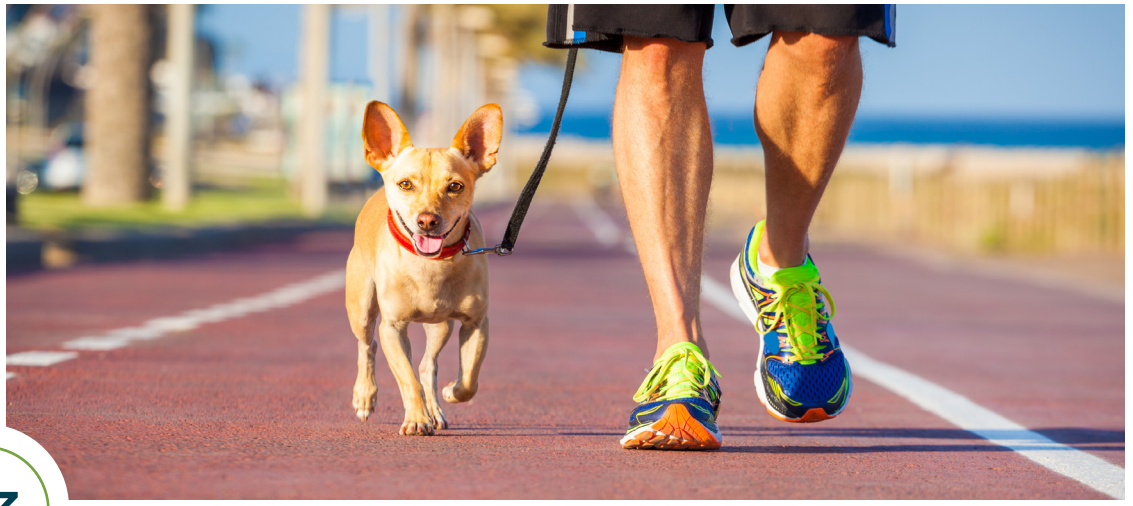
- * Limit caffeine and added sugar.
- * Drink enough fluids for your needs.
- * Eat foods that contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in foods such as oily fish, walnuts, and flaxseed.
- * Be sure your diet includes sources of vitamin D and magnesium.

Not sure if your diet meets these goals or how much of these nutrients you need? Talk with your doctor or a registered dietitian. You can work together to develop an eating plan that is balanced and that meets your health and nutritional needs.



HEALTH TIP:

Tired? Sugary treats like candy can raise and drop your energy quickly. That can leave you more tired than before. For longer-lasting energy, try whole grains, fresh fruits, and starches like potatoes and peas.



03

SERIOUS ABOUT QUITTING?

We at Healthyroads understand the challenges of quitting smoking. That's why we offer a variety of online tools and articles to help you quit—once and for all. Our web-based tools give you every chance to succeed. For anyone considering quitting smoking, take the first step and visit www.healthyroads.com.

Active Living Can't Do It All? Do a Little

There will be days when your workout feels like a hurdle that's just a bit too high. Maybe your motivation or energy has nosedived. Maybe you just can't find the time for the workout you planned. You may be tempted to scrap it altogether. But it's good to remember that doing something is usually better than doing nothing at all.

So, what can you do on tough days to get yourself moving—even a little bit? Try these tips:

- * **Adjust your thinking.** Some people can fall into a pattern of all-or-nothing thinking. "If I can't get my full workout in, then it's not worth bothering with." This kind of thinking may cost you some fitness and momentum. Try to be more flexible on days when you don't have the time, energy, or motivation to do a full workout.
- * **Commit to 5 minutes.** Sometimes, getting started is the hardest part. Here's a simple tip that may help. Commit to just 5 minutes of activity. At the end of 5 minutes, if you still really want to quit, let yourself. That's it. Once you get started, you may find that it's not so hard to keep going. And if you choose to quit? Even 5 minutes of movement may help relax and warm your muscles, improve your mood, and boost your energy.
- * **Make it convenient.** Keep a pair of walking shoes at your desk and walk at lunch. Or plug in a fitness DVD that can be done right in your living room. Take the hassle out of your workouts. Or at least have a low-hassle backup for days when your regular workout seems unworkable.
- * **Break it up.** Don't have time for a 30-minute workout? Break it up into three 10-minute sessions throughout the day. You'll enjoy the same health and fitness benefits as you would with one 30-minute session.

Sometimes, there are good reasons for skipping a workout, such as feeling ill or dealing with an emergency. Take care of your needs on such days. But when low motivation or a lack of time or energy is the problem, pledge to do one thing to stay active that day. No activity is too small to count.



04

Life Skills

Dining Out the Healthy Way

There's something about eating out that can cause even the most strong-willed to forget about eating healthy. But with a little bit of planning and knowledge, you can still enjoy a meal out without the guilt. Here are a few tips to help you:

Start with a healthy snack. It may seem strange to eat before heading out to a restaurant, but eating a small healthy snack before you leave can help you make healthier choices later. Eating half an apple or banana may keep you from yielding to that milkshake and double order of french fries.

Choose healthy side dishes. Sides like french fries, potato chips, or creamy pasta salads can pack on a lot of extra calories. That might undermine healthy choices you've made for your main dish. Ask if you can switch out fries with steamed veggies instead. Or if side veggies are served in a butter or cheese sauce, ask if it can be left off. For your salad, stick with simple oil-and-vinegar dressing or ask for a small portion of dressing on the side.

Here's what to look for (and avoid) on the menu. Descriptions of main dishes and side dishes can tell you a lot about how healthy they are. Look for terms like baked, broiled, roasted, steamed, baked, or raw. Here are some you may want to avoid:

- * Buttery, sautéed, fried, battered, breaded, creamed or creamy, cheesy, au gratin, scalloped, or pot pie or crusted. Foods prepared in these ways may be high in fat.
- * Pickled, cocktail sauce, smoked, in broth, or in a tomato base. Foods prepared in these ways may be high in salt (sodium).
- * Glazed or candied. Foods prepared in these ways may be high in added sugar.

Manage portion control. It's easy to overeat in a restaurant when the portion sizes are as big as they are. Here are a few tips to help you manage how much you eat:

- * If you know the restaurant serves big portions, split a meal with someone.
- * Ask for half of your order to be wrapped to go before it's even served.
- * Order a healthy appetizer as your main meal.
- * If you order dessert, split it with the others at the table.

You can often find a restaurant's menu online if you want to take the time to look at it ahead of time. Most restaurants will gladly accommodate you if you wish to make a few menu changes. Just because you're dining out doesn't mean you have to give up dining healthy.

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