WELCOA
HEALTH BULLETINS

TO YOUR HEALTH
WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

RUNNING ON EMPTY?

What Might Be Zapping Your Energy

Everyone occasionally feels a little tired or sluggish, but if you're constantly feeling drained it could be tied to some of your daily habits. Check out these culprits:

YOU'RE EATING TOO MUCH SUGAR. Sure, a candy bar or cookie can provide a quick pick-me up, but it can just as quickly make you crash. Candy, soda and other processed foods are usually packed with sugar, which causes a very fast spike, and then drop in your blood sugar. It's a vicious cycle—you're bound to keep seeking that sugar rush only to be let down, feeling tired and cranky minutes later.

➜ *Get energized:* Having healthy snacks on hand is key, as they can help keep your energy and blood sugar stable for several hours. Seek snacks that provide a healthy dose of protein and carbs. Lean turkey or chicken on a slice of whole wheat bread or plain, nonfat yogurt with fruit are a few excellent options.

YOU'RE NOT DRINKING ENOUGH WATER. According to a study published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, even mild dehydration can cause fatigue, tiredness and low energy.

➜ *Get energized:* Drinking an extra glass or two of water could make a difference in your energy levels. Try drinking a glass as soon as you wake up and make water your beverage of choice at meals.

YOU'RE NOT GETTING ENOUGH IRON. Iron helps ensure that your cells can carry oxygen to your body's tissues. If you don't have enough iron, this process becomes more taxing on your body, and as a result, you may feel weak, tired and irritable.

➜ *Get energized:* Eat some iron-rich foods every day—cooked beef, chicken and turkey, sardines, spinach, lentils and beans are all good sources. You may also consider a supplement if you don't eat a lot of iron-rich foods.

YOU'RE SKIPPING MEALS. Food is your body's fuel—so skipping meals can literally force your body to run on empty. Moreover, if you skip a meal you're more likely to overeat later in the day, which can make you feel even more tired and sluggish.

➜ *Get energized:* All meals are important when it comes to energy. It's common for many to skip breakfast because they feel rushed in the morning. Plan and prepare your breakfast the night before to ensure you eat this critical meal.

SHOULD YOU SEE YOUR DOC?

If you're constantly fatigued and it's affecting your ability to perform your normal, daily tasks, you should call or see your doctor. Occasional fatigue is certainly a normal part of life, but it shouldn't be something you continually live with (especially if you're taking steps to address it, like getting adequate sleep, exercising and eating right).

WHAT'S NOT NORMAL?

Talk to your doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms—they may be tied to an underlying issue like type 2 diabetes or chronic fatigue syndrome:

- Severe fatigue (the kind that causes you to limit your usual activities) that lasts for several weeks and does not improve with rest.
- Chronic sleep problems (lasting several weeks) like being unable to fall asleep or stay asleep or still feeling tired or not rested after waking up.
- Any swelling in the glands in your neck or armpits that lasts for two weeks or longer.
- Chronic fatigue accompanied with frequent urination, extreme thirst or blurred vision.