



LIFE HEALTH

Coffee only an energy crutch



By Melissa Carr, Special to 24 hours
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That latte might look pretty and taste good, but it won't give you useful energy to keep you moving throughout the day.
(REUTERS)

Summer is a great time for lots of activities — with every weekend seemingly filled with promises of road trips, hikes, outdoor gatherings and more. It seems like a good idea in the planning stage, but sometimes we don't feel we will have enough energy to make it all happen. Boost up your reserves so that you don't need to suffer through or bail out on the good times.

One of the most common causes of low energy is stress. Chronic stress drains your energy like a leaky faucet. If you don't already, make sure that you include regular stress management practices, like meditation, deep breathing, and exercise. Traditional Chinese medicine employs a variety of treatments and self-practice techniques to help mend that leak and refill the reserves.

For example, try this simple exercise. Massage the area just under the ball of your foot, using your hand, your other foot, or even a small ball on the floor. This acupressure point, called "gushing spring," is a great point to help you feel grounded and calmer.

The right foods can also boost your energy. Caffeine is our most common crutch when it comes to energy slumps, but caffeine will only provide a temporary boost, often leaving you in a deeper pit when its effects wear off. Nature provides us with an abundance of high-octane foods. Hundreds of years ago, TCM doctors noticed which foods animals would eat to be re-energized. Blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, cranberries, and goji berries are rich in vitamins and minerals, and are a good source of fibre, allowing the natural sugars that supply us with energy to be released more steadily. In China, many of the TCM doctors add a small handful of goji berries to hot water and drink that throughout the day.

Did you know that poor posture can also lead to fatigue? Slouching compresses the diaphragm and prevents full respiration. Imagine a string pulling you up from the top of your head, keeping your chin slightly tucked while you breathe in deeply.

If your energy is consistently low, it is important to look for a cause. Low levels of iron or vitamin B12, digestive issues, insomnia, sleep apnea, low thyroid function, imbalanced hormones, poorly managed pain, and illness can all zap our energy. Rather than mask the problem, look for ways to address the root cause. Then go out and celebrate the season.

Dr. Melissa Carr is a registered doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

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Yes, that's true that coffee is only just a common crutch when your energy slumps. Though it happens temporarily, but at least it can boost your energy. Just eat the right foods and sip a little coffee to boost your energy.

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