



Blog of the month – July 2016

Are your food choices energy boosters or sappers?

Summer's finally hitting its stride. With warm temps and plenty of long days, the season's perfect for weekend warriors as well as stay- and vacationers to get outdoors and get going. And that takes lots of energy. So, are your food choices boosting your energy? Or sapping it?

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) offers five ways to keep your energy levels up and those dreaded daytime slumps at bay during this busy summer season.

1. Eat often. The “I-don’t-have-time-to-eat-now-so-will-save-up-for-one-big-meal-tonight” approach just doesn’t cut it. And never has. AND says we should actually eat every three to four hours to fuel a healthful metabolism, maintain muscle mass and prevent those pesky in-between meal hungries. Eating frequently throughout the day will help you stay more focused and actually feel better. It’s hard to argue with that!

2. Lighten up. AND professionals say that eating “just enough, but not too much” helps curb cravings and at the same time reduces the risk of overeating. So how much is enough you ask? According to AND, if a single meal carries you to five or six hours without hunger pangs, you are eating too much.

3. Keep your meals in balance. For sustained energy, your plate of food at any given meal should include a combination of whole grains, lean protein, fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, low-fat or fat-free dairy and just a smidge of healthy fats.

4. Enjoy snacks. Yes, you read that right! But choose them wisely to keep your energy going. High-energy snacks should include protein and fiber-rich carbohydrates. Apples, nuts, carrots, string cheese, Greek yogurt and berries are good examples. But here’s the kicker: Snacks should not be eaten to fill you up. Use them to serve as a bridge to provide energy between meals.

5. Give em' the boot. We're talking about sodas, sugary coffee concoctions and energy drinks. Yes, these beverages may give you a brief boost of energy, but you'll likely come crashing down soon after. Better beverage choices include water, fat-free or low-fat milk, unsweetened tea and low-calorie flavored water.

So there you have it. Eat, drink and play hard. Because now you've got the knowledge ... and energy to do it right.