

Foods that fight fatigue

Your body runs off what you feed it. The best way to get the most energy from your food is to make sure you are giving yourself the best food possible.

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For 15 years, Emma Tashobya was one of the managers at one of the top hotels in Nakasero, an upscale Kampala suburb. His job required him to sometimes work through the night.

"Much as I was paid well and had a lot of incentives, I had personal businesses to attend to on days when I would not work during the night. There were days when I had to reduce on sleeping time to attend to businesses but this came at a cost," Tashobya recalls.

He adds: "I felt tired and stressed all the time. It took a lot of courage to resign after a doctor advised me that in excess, fatigue may lead to serious health concerns."

What fatigue is

According to Dr Umarashid Gulooba of Makerere University Business School health centre, fatigue is a condition that occurs when you take long hours of no sleep accompanied with brain activity. It is also a condition when you feel tired and exhausted even when you have just started your day.

Dr Gulooba also explains that fatigue manifests in two ways. There is severe or chronic fatigue that happens as a result of prolonged loss of required sleep or resting time. Medically, Gulooba says this is referred to as sleep debt and that it usually takes a much longer time which can be in months or weeks to manifest its symptoms.

There is also acute fatigue that happens as a result of having less sleep compared to the recommended or required sleeping time.

"If you sleep at 1am and wake up at 5am, you are likely to experience acute fatigue in the long run. That is when you see people dozing off in the morning. You are recommended to sleep for six to eight hours a day," Gulooba explains, adding that some of the effects of fatigue include the inability to make key decisions ei-

ther at home or work.

Foods to eat

Hope Nimurungi, a freelance nutritionist, says foods that fight fatigue are mostly fruits and vegetables such as watermelons, pineapples and yellow bananas.

"When you eat fruits and vegetables in their whole forms, your body absorbs nutrients such as proteins and vitamins still in their whole form. The body is quick to use up the nutrients and supply them to all body organs to help them function better and faster," Nimurungi says.

Milk

While milk can at times be fatty, Nimurungi says when you drink boiled milk before retiring to bed, it relaxes your body muscles when you wake up in the morning and keeps you alert most of the day.

Roots foods such as sweet potatoes, Nimurungi adds, are rich in potassium which is known for reducing on the amounts of stress in your body that causes fatigue. Brown rice too, which is rich in proteins and carbohydrates equally helps fight body fatigue.

Coffee

If you are rushing to work and you miss out on making a cup of coffee at home, Nimurungi recommends making it a point to make one at work or passing by a restaurant to order one. Coffee, she reasons also fights fatigue by providing your body with the energy to stay awake and alert at work without the urge and need to sleep.

Spinach

According to *activebeat*, an online portal, spinach also fights fatigue. The portal states that spinach is rich in magnesium, a nutrient that, according to *Best Health* magazine, "is essential for the production of a molecule called adenosine triphosphate, the end product of food's conversion to energy." Ensuring proper daily intake of magnesium can prevent the feelings of fatigue and physical weakness that result if the body is running low.



FOOD WARS

Groundnuts Vs cashew nuts



Groundnuts

Eating 28 nuts gives you 10 per cent of the recommended daily intake of fibre which helps to maintain normal cholesterol levels. At seven grammes of protein per 28 groundnuts, they have more protein than any other nuts. They also have plant sterols which help lower cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease.



Cashew nuts

Cashews contain low fat content when compared to other nuts. They are also high in oleic acid form which is very healthy for the heart. They are cholesterol-free and the antioxidants present keep you away from heart disease. The high copper content in cashew nuts helps fight against cancerous cells and keeps you away from colon cancer.

By Carolyn B. Atangaza