



Public Health
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Aitkin County

Bite Back the Slump

Are you often feeling sluggish, fatigued, or in need of an energy boost to get through the day? In our fast-paced world, maintaining high energy levels throughout the day is essential. Whether you're a student, a working professional, or managing a busy household, understanding how to fuel your body effectively can make a significant difference.

The key to sustained energy lies in what you eat. Choosing the right balance of nutrient-dense foods can help stabilize blood sugar, improve focus, and fuel your body for optimal performance. Here's a guide on how to eat for energy, along with simple, delicious recipes to get you started.

Energy-Boosting Nutrition: Building Your Body Like a House

Imagine your body is like a house. To stay upright, efficient, and livable, a house needs a solid foundation, sturdy framing, internal systems, and environmental protection. The same goes for your body when it comes to **fueling energy, strength, and resilience**.

Carbohydrates: The Concrete Foundation

Carbohydrates are the **concrete slab or foundation** of your house. They're your body's **main source of energy**, just as a foundation bears the weight of everything above. **Complex carbs**—like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables—are high-grade concrete that provides **long-lasting, steady support**. **Simple sugars** are like cracked, quick-dry cement—giving a quick boost, but they crumble fast under pressure.

Proteins: The Framework and Support Beams

Proteins are the **framework**—the beams, studs, and supports that hold the structure together. They don't just help with strength; they're constantly **repairing, rebuilding, and reinforcing**. Whether it's lean meat, beans, or legumes, protein sources help maintain **muscle and tissue health**, giving your house the structural integrity it needs.

Healthy Fats: The Insulation and Roof

Healthy fats are like the **insulation and roofing**—protective, energy-conserving, and essential for long-term durability. Fats provide **slow-burning, long-lasting fuel** and help regulate temperature and function, just as a well-insulated house stays warm and efficient. Think of fats from nuts, seeds, avocado, and olive oil as the smart design choices that help your energy last longer.

Micronutrients: The Wiring, Plumbing, and Finishing Touches

Micronutrients—vitamins and minerals—are the **hidden systems** that make your house functional. You might not see them, but if the **wiring (B vitamins)**, **plumbing (electrolytes like potassium and sodium)**, or **HVAC (antioxidants and minerals)** aren't working, your whole system suffers. They **support metabolism, energy conversion, oxygen flow, and repair processes**—ensuring your "house" doesn't just look good, but runs smoothly.

Hydration: The Flowing Water System

Water is the **plumbing and water supply system** of the house—it flows everywhere, connects all rooms, and keeps everything clean and functional. **Hydration regulates body temperature, moves nutrients, flushes out waste, and lubricates joints**—just as water pressure powers showers, sinks, and toilets. Without it, your energy systems stall. You can eat perfectly, but **without water, your “house” can't function.**

Processed Foods: The Structural Sabotage

Now imagine building your house with low-quality, synthetic materials—that's what happens when you overconsume highly processed foods. These foods are often stripped of nutrients and loaded with added sugars, refined oils, and artificial additives. Your body doesn't always recognize how to metabolize them properly, so it often stores them as fat—like piling up toxic materials in your garage because your disposal system can't keep up.

Over time, this weakens your "foundation," clogs your internal systems, and leads to inflammation, energy crashes, and weight gain. Just like a house built with cheap materials will deteriorate faster, a body fueled primarily by processed foods will see declines in performance, stability, and longevity.

Whole Foods: Quality Materials That Last

Whole foods—like fresh produce, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats—are the premium materials. They're packed with nutrients your body recognizes and knows how to use efficiently. Eating a diet based on whole foods means your house is built with care, using strong beams, clean wiring, and high-grade insulation.

Energy-Boosting Tips

- Eat balanced meals with protein, carbs, and fats to maintain energy levels.
 - Avoid excessive sugar: While sugar gives an initial boost, it leads to energy crashes.
 - Stay consistent: Eat smaller meals or snacks every 3-4 hours to avoid energy dips.
 - Plan ahead: Prepare snacks like protein balls, trail mix, or hard-boiled eggs for easy, energy-boosting options.
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Build Smart. Fuel Strong. Stay Hydrated.

Eating for energy means choosing foods that provide a balance of carbohydrates, proteins, and healthy fats while ensuring adequate hydration. Incorporating these elements into your diet can help sustain your energy levels, improve focus, and enhance overall well-being. Try these simple recipes to enjoy a nutritious boost anytime you need it!



No-Bake Protein Balls

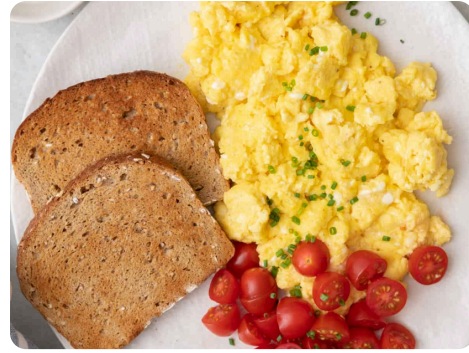
These protein balls are packed with healthy fats, protein, and a hint of natural sweetness for the perfect grab-and-go snack.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup natural peanut butter (or almond butter)
- 1/3 cup honey or maple syrup
- 1/4 cup dark chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 2 tablespoons flaxseed meal
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Optional: 1 scoop protein powder

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, mix all ingredients together until well combined.
2. Roll the mixture into 1-inch balls.
3. Place on a tray and refrigerate for 20 minutes.
4. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to a week.



Scrambled Eggs with Cottage Cheese

A protein-rich breakfast to keep you energized and satisfied.

Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons cottage cheese
- 1 teaspoon olive oil or butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: chopped herbs (like chives or parsley)

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, whisk the eggs with the cottage cheese until combined.
2. Heat olive oil or butter in a non-stick skillet over medium heat.
3. Pour the egg mixture into the skillet and gently scramble with a spatula, cooking until the eggs are soft and set.
4. Season with salt, pepper, and herbs if desired.
5. Serve immediately with whole-grain toast or fresh veggies.