

# .24 HOURS TO *increased energy*

Face the festive season feeling full of beans with this rejuvenating, one-day boost for your body and mind.



**D**ECEMBER CAN BE A busy time of year when it comes to socialising, with office parties, family get-togethers and social gatherings to enjoy. At times, all that fun, food and drink can leave you feeling tired and drained.

Our one-day energy booster is designed to be used whenever you feel you need a lift throughout the month. Using a combination of nutritious food, energising exercise and beauty boosters, it will leave you glowing from head to toe. To get started, choose a day, preferably at a weekend, when you can devote as much uninterrupted time as possible to yourself. Avoid scheduling in lots of tasks, especially any outside of the home, and try turning your mobile phone off for most of the day to free your mind and give your thumbs a rest!

### Do your prep

Get ready in advance for your energy-boosting day by buying the following:

- A bunch of orange and/or yellow flowers. Put these in a vase in your bedroom so you'll see them when you first wake.
- Bach Natural Fatigue Remedy (£12.89, [nutricentral.co.uk](http://nutricentral.co.uk)).
- Two lemons, three apples, a large piece of fresh ginger root, two cloves of garlic, two onions, three sweet potatoes, five carrots, two courgettes, three celery stalks, two beetroots, kombu seaweed, a bunch of fresh parsley, a bay leaf, a red chilli, watercress, a selection of green vegetables, long grain brown rice, 100g turkey mince.
- Spirulina powder.
- Epsom salts.
- Plain/cheap ground coffee.
- Lavender oil.

## RISE AND SHINE 7-9AM

### Awaken your senses

Orange and yellow are both uplifting, invigorating shades. Colour experts say painting your bedroom walls yellow helps you wake feeling bright and chirpy. However, a bunch of flowers is a much easier way to achieve that, even on the dullest of winter mornings.

As soon as you get out of bed, use more flower power to invigorate yourself. Spray some Bach Natural Fatigue Remedy onto your tongue. It contains essences of clematis, which is said to help you focus, as well as olive, which helps to restore vitality.

### Give yourself a squeeze

To help you feel energised faster, use a massage technique to get your blood pumping. Self-administered acupressure can help boost your mood and mental alertness in the morning, according to a 2014 study published in the *Global Journal of Health Science*. 'Try massaging the pressure point between your index finger and thumb,' says acupuncturist Tamzin Freeman. This spot is known as Large Intestine 4, and helps to move energy around your body. 'Using your left thumb, feel down the bone of your right index finger into your hand where it meets the thumb bone. Use your thumb to massage the fleshy area just below it.' Massage one hand for five seconds, then do five seconds on the other one.



## Stretch yourself

While you sleep, your digestive system slows down as your body rests, so help it reawaken with some morning yoga. 'You don't need to do a multitude of poses to get a loosening and rejuvenating effect,' says yoga teacher Charlotte Watts, author of *The De-Stress*



**1 COW POSE**  
From all fours, with your hands below your shoulders and your knees under your hips, exhale and lift your spine up, dropping your head. On the next inhalation, drop your spine between your

Effect (Hay House). 'A combination of spinal movements, including forward bending and twisting, is enough to re-energise your body.' Try the following sequences, staying in the poses for as long as you feel comfortable, inhaling and exhaling deeply through your nose.



shoulders and hips, reversing the curve and lengthening through your neck instead of just lifting your chin. Do 10 of each, synchronising your breath with each movement.



**2 DOWNWARD-FACING DOG**  
Again from all fours, spread your hands, tuck your toes under and push up into an inverted V shape. Keep your knees bent and heels up at first if you feel a bit stiff. Create small figure-of-eight moves through your shoulders and hips to loosen up and allow your energy to flow. Hold for 10 seconds.



**CHILD'S POSE**  
From a kneeling position, bring your big toes together, open your knees and walk your hands forward. Allow time to release your lower back and eventually bring your forehead to the floor or onto your fists if it won't reach the floor. Breathe in and out 10 times slowly, feeling your body gradually release further.



**4 SUPINE LORD OF THE FISHES POSE**  
Lie with your knees bent, the outer edges of your feet aligned with the edges of the mat. Open your arms out, elbows comfortably bent so your wrists can drop. Inhale and, on the exhale, let your knees drop to the right. Rest in the pose for five breaths then repeat on the left.



**CORPSE POSE**  
Allow time for the corpse pose, also known as savasana, at the end of your session. Lie on your back with your arms and legs slightly spread, relaxing fully for at least five minutes. This pose is when you assimilate your energy and release any tension in your body.

## Shake it up

While you're asleep your body becomes dehydrated because you're not topping up your fluid levels, especially during the winter when you have your windows and doors closed and the heating on. Replenishing your body with much-needed fluids and minerals will help you feel more alert and awake when you rise. To make an energy-boosting rehydration drink, put 1 peeled lemon, a 1-inch piece of peeled ginger, 2 apples and 1 tsp spirulina powder into a blender. Add up to 200ml water depending on how thick you want it and blend until smooth.

'Lemons are one of the best sources of vitamin C, which provides antioxidant protection to cells,' says public health nutritionist Yvonne Wake. 'The apples will give you sustained energy through slow-release fructose, and the spirulina, which is a form of algae, is said to promote better oxygen transportation around your body via your blood, to help fight fatigue.'



## Turn up the volume

Studies have shown that listening to music for an hour a day can help reduce fatigue. So play your album of choice or simply have the radio on in the background as you're going about your day.

If you like to sing along to your favourite tunes, all the better. A study from Royal Holloway, University of London, showed that singing increases your heart rate, while decreasing tension at the same time.





## MIDDAY MOTIVATION 12-1PM

### Gather your thoughts

'Your body clock tends to run in 90-minute cycles,' says hypnotherapist Sharon Stiles. This is known as the ultradian rhythm, or basic rest-activity cycle. 'Every hour and a half you need a short break from what you're doing so your mind can process the information you've been taking in. Giving yourself short breaks during the day is the equivalent of having mini sleeps.' Try going for a short walk, sitting quietly looking out of a window, or even switching tasks to something less mentally taxing, such as ironing instead of paperwork.

### Make some mineral-boosting soup

Eating rich, heavy meals creates a lot of work for your digestive system, which, in turn, can lead to you feeling sluggish and tired. Instead, opt for this revitalising, easily digested soup. It's rich in magnesium and potassium, both of which are important for replenishing nerves and muscles. The capsaicin in chilli helps your body burn fat, while the seaweed boosts iodine levels, which is essential for healthy thyroid hormone synthesis. If the soup alone isn't filling enough, have a slice of wholegrain bread with it, which contains around 30g of low-glycaemic carbohydrates to keep your energy levels steady. Chop the vegetables and parsley, and put all the ingredients into a large pan of water. Bring to the boil, then simmer, covered, for about 30 minutes. You can eat it as it is, or allow the mixture to cool before blending it into a thick soup.

- Onion 1
- Garlic cloves 2
- Fresh ginger 2in
- Medium sweet potatoes 3, unpeeled
- Carrots 3, unpeeled
- Courgettes 2
- Celery stalks 2, halved
- Small beetroot 1, unpeeled
- Kombu seaweed 3 pieces
- Fresh parsley handful
- Bay leaf 1
- Red chilli, 1 deseeded
- Water 2l



## ENERGISE YOUR AFTERNOON 2-5PM

### Have a boost with beetroot

Drinking coffee before exercising helps increase your energy levels because the caffeine speeds up your central nervous system. However, some people find that it makes them feel jittery. A study from Kansas State University found that drinking a shot of beetroot juice two hours before a workout helps boost energy levels during exercise, without caffeine's side effect.

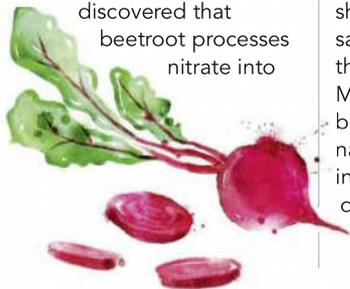
The researchers discovered that beetroot processes nitrate into

nitric oxide in a way that means less oxygen is burned in the body, so you can work out for longer.

To make your pre-workout shot, chop the following ingredients and blend with 200ml water:

- Carrots 2
- Beetroot 1
- Apple 1
- Fresh ginger, 1 small piece
- Celery stalk 1
- Lemon ½
- Watercress handful

'The addition of watercress in your shot provides fibre,' says nutritional therapist Jackie McCusker. 'Fibre will balance out the natural sugars found in beetroot, so you don't get sugar cravings later on.'



### Enliven your skin

Once you've done your workout, take a shower to remove sweat and let your skin breathe, giving your lymphatic system an additional boost in the process. Make a body scrub using old coffee grounds or sea salt, mixed with an oil of your choice, such as coconut or jojoba. Step into the bath or shower and rub handfuls of the scrub over your body in upward, circular movements towards your heart to encourage the lymph system to get moving. When showering off your scrub, brave a cold blast if you can. Researchers suggest a three-minute cold shower can help counteract some of the effects of chronic fatigue.



### Get your blood pumping

Exercise is the best way to boost energy, according to a study in *Psychological Bulletin*. Aerobic exercise is an effective way to kick-start a sluggish lymphatic system – the network that transports infection-fighting white blood cells around your body. Go for a 30-minute brisk walk or jog or, if you're feeling dynamic, try a 15-minute high-intensity interval session outdoors. The crisp air is just what you need

to wake up your senses. While working out, pay attention to your body and surroundings. Focus on the coolness of the air in your nostrils, how your muscles feel and the colour of the sky. Other thoughts may creep in, but just acknowledge them without exploring them. A busy mind can be draining, but by exercising mindfully, you're energising your body and lightening your mental load.

## WIND DOWN FOR THE EVENING 7-9PM

### Ensure a restorative night

The best time to eat your evening meal is around three hours before bed as this gives your food time to digest. Turkey is a nutritious, seasonal choice. It contains L-tryptophan, an essential amino acid that converts into serotonin, which is metabolised into the sleep hormone melatonin. Fry 100g of turkey mince in a pan with one diced onion.

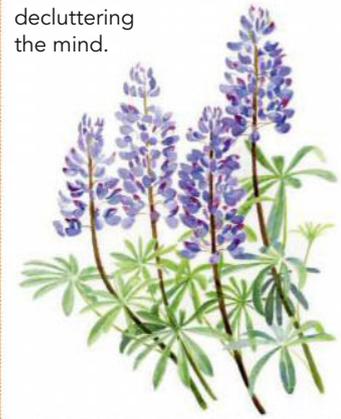


Onions contain a compound called allyl propyl disulphide, which helps balance blood sugar in a similar way to insulin. Combine it with 100g of long-grain brown rice, as complex carbohydrates increase the rate at which tryptophan is transported to your brain to synthesise into melatonin.

Make a side dish of steamed green vegetables, such as broccoli, cavolo nero (also called black kale) or chard. Green vegetables contain high levels of B vitamins, which are needed for the release of certain neurohormones, including melatonin and serotonin. These help regulate your circadian rhythm and sleep-wake cycle. Steaming is one of the healthiest ways to cook green vegetables, as they retain more of their nutrients.

### Soak in the tub

One way to help you get a good night's sleep is to take a bath with Epsom salts and lavender oil. Epsom salts are a form of magnesium sulphate, which helps reduce muscle tension. As for the lavender, studies have shown that inhaling its scent before bed helps increase deep, slow-wave sleep – a phase that's essential for decluttering the mind.



### Prepare for sounder sleep

Your sleep consists of 90-minute cycles, where your brain goes from deep, non-rapid eye movement (non-REM) sleep to REM sleep.

Your early sleep cycles are dominated by this deeper non-REM sleep, but by the early hours your natural circadian rhythm responds to the slowly rising light levels, and less deep REM sleep starts to creep in. So, you'll feel better restored by hitting the hay before midnight – preferably by 10pm.

If your mind is still a little restless when you get into bed, try the 4-7-8 breathing technique, designed to release tension throughout your body and promote sleep.

To start, exhale completely through your mouth. Keeping your mouth closed, inhale through your nose for four seconds. Hold your breath for seven seconds, then exhale slowly and fully through your mouth for eight seconds. Do this at least four times.

This wind-down routine is the perfect end to a restorative day, and will ensure you wake feeling rejuvenated and raring to go – whatever comes your way.