



HEALTHY LIVING

Time to Recharge

Natural Ways to Increase Your Energy Level

The start of the school year often involves new classes and activities for the children and likely new schedules for the accommodating parents. With so much on the go from morning to evening, it's natural to feel tired during mid-day.

Rather than reaching for that second cup of coffee to give you a boost to make it to the end of the day, try these alternatives, courtesy of the *Huffington Post*.

1. **Tap your thymus.** This helps to trigger the production of T-cells, boost energy, relieve stress and increase strength and vitality. Your thymus is located at the centre top of our chest, below the collar and between your breasts.
2. **Opt for some fresh air.** A change in scenery is good for you. Get some fresh air by going for a walk outside during your lunchbreak. If it's sunny outside, you'll catch some vitamin D too.
3. **Drink water or green tea.** Fatigue is often caused by dehydration. Be sure to maintain enough fluid in your body to fight any weariness. If you don't like

the taste of plain water, drink some green tea. It's loaded with antioxidants that's good for your body and brain.

4. **Eat a healthy snack.** Sure, the chocolate bar is tempting but know that it can drag down your energy level in a couple of hours. Elect to eat an apple or some unsweetened yogurt instead to re-energize and stabilize your sugar level.
5. **Improve your posture.** Practice sitting up straight. Having good posture can help with the blood flow to your brain, which in turn can give you more energy.
6. **Get on your feet.** Even better than sitting up straight is standing up on your feet as it can ignite your heart and muscles. You'll be surprised to see how standing can make you feel alert and more productive with your work.



HEALTHY HEART

Inbox Burnout

How Stress is Linked to Frequent Email Checking

Admit it. You probably snuck in one or two (or maybe a dozen) glances at your email inbox during your summer vacation. It's one thing to feel like you are on top of things when you return to the workplace, it's another when your constant email checking is taking a toll on your health. The toll in this case is an increased level of stress.

Kostadin Kushlev, a PhD candidate at the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia, concluded this finding after leading a study that consisted of 124 adults with various professions. Some of the participants were restricted to check their email to three times a day for five working days, while the other participants were given permission to check as often as they could for that same duration. Incidentally, their frequency (about 13 times a day) turned out to be the same before they engaged in the study.

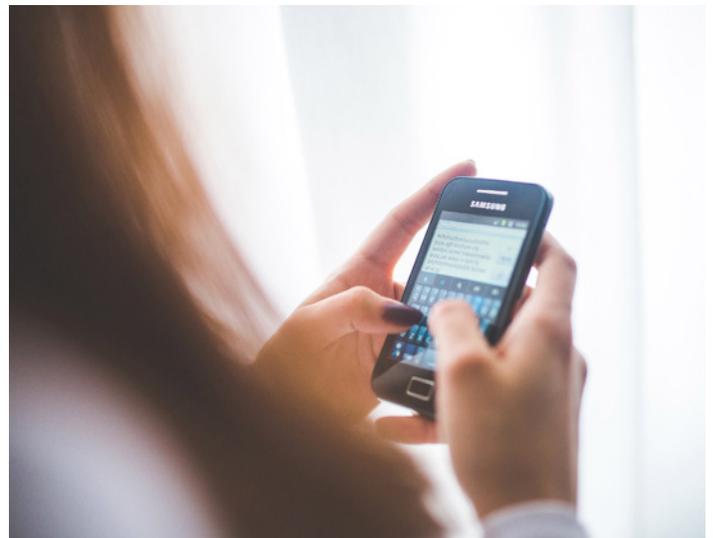
The following week, the instructions were reversed for the participants. Daily surveys which included information pertaining to their stress level were asked to be completed during the study period. The result was that the participants felt less stressed when they checked their email less often.

Reducing the frequency to check your email is harder done than said. Both Kostadin Kushlev and Art Markman, a psychology professor at the University of Texas, recommend checking and responding to emails only a couple of times a day during dedicated "email time" versus checking it constantly even when you are working on another task. The latter can increase stress because you are imposing "a high cognitive load", said Dr. Markman.

Another useful tip is to avoid checking your email

once your computer is turned on in the morning. The morning hours should be used to start or complete the day's more important work rather than persistently looking at your inbox to sift through a night's worth of incoming emails.

Also try turning off your email program when when you are working on an important task, That way, you'll have better concentration, which could result in a more productive day.



HEALTHY MIND

No Laughing Matter

Bullying in the Workplace

Bullying knows no boundaries. It doesn't just happen on the playground – it's also prevalent in the workplace. In fact, 40% of Canadians has experienced one or more acts of workplace bullying at least once a week for the last six months, according to Jacqueline Power, assistant professor of management at the University of Windsor's Odette School of Business.

So, what constitutes bullying?

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Healthy Heart, Healthy Mind, Healthy Living

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety define it as “acts or verbal comments that could ‘mentally’ hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.”

Workplace bullying effects everyone. The emotional, mental and physical well-being of the targeted employee is compromised and could result in increased absenteeism and possibly an extended absence.

Other employees who may not be directly bullied but are still part of that toxic environment may feel a waned sense of loyalty to the company.

For the employer, there are the costs of declined productivity and high turnover, if bullying is not addressed and rectified.

In Canada, only a few jurisdictions have occupational health and safety legislation that is

specific to bullying. While there is little progress on establishing a federal legislation which solely addresses bullying, in British Columbia, WorkSafeBC has developed policies and resources related to workplace bullying and harassment. The other jurisdictions, except New Brunswick, Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon, only have legislation about workplace violence and/or harassment; there is nothing specific about bullying.

Ultimately, it is the duty of the employer to protect employees from all mental and physical risks in the workplace.

