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Health Ministry

6 EVERYDAY ENERGY BOOSTERS

Did you have trouble getting out of bed this morning? You are not alone! While these tips are aimed at persons with Rheumatoid Arthritis, they can apply to all of us. All of us have experienced some joint and muscle pain and stiffness from time to time...some more often than others. If you follow these 6 easy tips you will find yourself feeling much better with more energy to burn than you are used to.

1. Start your day with a smile...

Something as simple as a smile can affect your day. Try it...draw your lips together, and lift the corners of your mouth into a smile. How did it feel? Think you can do it again? You might be surprised by how the human body can connect a physical action with an emotional response. If your friends and family see you smiling, it may trigger a little more brightness in them. You definitely will feel better yourself!

2. Take it slow...

You want to be active but you don't want to overdo it or put excess stress on your body. The secret? Do everything in moderation. Use your strongest joints to lift heavy things. Be smart about the number of physically demanding activities you do in one day. In other words don't play 36 holes of golf or 2 tennis matches in a row without resting. Rest between any strenuous activities!



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3. **Snack smart...**

Just as a car can't run on an empty tank, your body won't have much spark if you don't fill it with nutritious food. Start by upgrading your snacks. Instead of candy, cookies, crackers, potato chips, or pop, try a healthful option...such as sprinkling some ground flaxseed, into a fresh fruit smoothie. This snack is a rich source of Omega-3 fatty acids known for their anti-inflammatory properties,

4. **Move to feel better...**

It is no secret that staying fit and active can have a significant impact on your energy level. Did you know that it takes only a small dose of exercise to feel a change in your body? Most people like to start a new fitness routine by walking for 10 – 15 minutes a day. Walking is the easiest and best exercise you can get. Take the stairs instead of an elevator or park your car at the far end of the parking lot and walk to wherever you are going. Just look at the people who joined the "100 Mile Club"! Range-of-motion exercises...like yoga...can help keep your joints working. Swimming, water aerobics and water walking are great ways to stretch those muscles and tendons for easy movement without a lot of stress on the joints.

5. **Improve sleep habits....**

Studies show that a large portion of the population experience disrupted or poor quality sleep. Sleep is important for maintaining health and energy. Wind down at least one hour before going to sleep. This could include dimming the lights, turning off the TV, taking a warm shower or bath or curling up with a book or pet. At this time you may want to do some slow, gentle stretching exercises to reduce any pain or stiffness you might have. This may help you get a good night's sleep and you will wake up feeling like a new person. Remember...put a smile on your face!

6. **Watch your diet...**

There is **no** "miracle diet" that can replace nourishing meals and snacks. If you are experiencing joint pain or stiffness especially if you are doing new exercises, you may want to eat foods high in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3's are commonly found in salmon, tuna, halibut, sardines and mackerel. Or if you are not into fish, plant foods high in the omega-3's are flaxseed and walnuts. Capsaicin (the compound that gives chili peppers their spicy



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flavor) has also been shown to relieve joint and muscle pain...this is a topical application.

Now that we have all these wonderful suggestions on how to improve our energy levels...let's get up in the morning and **put a smile on our faces**. Then we can **exercise in moderation** with **rests between strenuous activity**, **eat healthy** and **snack smarter** then get **better sleep!**

Information provided by Health Monitor

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