

Wellbeing Insights



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Eating for Energy: Fueling Your Day Effectively

We have all felt that mid-afternoon slump where focus fades and energy dips. While it's tempting to reach for another cup of coffee or a sugary snack, the real solution often starts much earlier in the day. The foods you choose can either fuel steady energy or send you on a rollercoaster of spikes and crashes.

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Eating for Energy: Fueling Your Day Effectively

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At its core, energy comes from the nutrients in the food you eat. Your body converts carbohydrates into glucose, its primary energy source. However, not all carbohydrates are created equal. According to the Cleveland Clinic, highly processed or sugary foods like pastries, candy, and soda are digested quickly, leading to a short burst of energy followed by a crash. In contrast, complex carbohydrates such as oats, brown rice, quinoa, and sweet potatoes break down more slowly, providing a steady, sustained release of energy that helps you stay focused and productive.

Protein and healthy fats are just as important. Including protein like eggs, chicken, fish, Greek yogurt, beans, or lentils helps stabilize blood sugar levels and prevents sudden dips in energy. Healthy fats from foods like avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil digest more slowly, offering longer-lasting fuel. When combined, these nutrients create balanced meals that support consistent energy rather than quick fixes.

Fruits and vegetables also play a key role. Options like bananas, berries, oranges, leafy greens, and broccoli provide natural sugars, fiber, vitamins, and hydration, which contribute to better energy levels. For example, bananas can offer a quick boost, while leafy greens supply iron and nutrients that help reduce fatigue over time.

Shopping for energy does not have to be complicated. Focus on whole, minimally processed foods. Stock up on staples like oats, brown rice, or whole grain bread; lean

proteins such as eggs, chicken, fish, or beans; and a variety of produce like bananas, berries, spinach, and sweet potatoes. Add healthy fats like avocados, almonds, walnuts, or chia seeds to round things out. Having these basics on hand makes it easier to build balanced meals with minimal effort.

Putting it all together can be simple. A breakfast of oats topped with Greek yogurt, berries, and almonds delivers a strong mix of nutrients to start your day. For lunch, try a bowl with grilled chicken, quinoa, roasted vegetables, and a drizzle of olive oil to help power you through the afternoon. Even snacks can work in your favor. A banana with peanut butter provides both immediate and sustained energy.

How you eat matters. Skipping meals can drain your energy, and even mild dehydration leads to fatigue. Staying hydrated and limiting processed, sugary foods can help you maintain steady energy and focus throughout the day.

Eating for energy is not about perfection; it's about making small, intentional choices that support your body throughout the day. By focusing on balanced meals with complex carbohydrates, protein, healthy fats, and plenty of fruits and vegetables, you can feel more energized, focused, and ready to take on whatever your day brings.

If you have any food allergies or specific dietary needs, consult your physician for recommendations on energy-boosting foods that are safe and suitable for you.



Caught in the Middle:

Financially Navigating the In-Between Years

If you've ever felt like you're being pulled in two directions at once, supporting your children while also helping aging parents, you're not alone. In fact, nearly one in four adults in the U.S. is part of the "sandwich generation," balancing care across multiple generations.¹

It's not just parents of young children and older adults. Many are also supporting adult children, grandchildren, in-laws, or other relatives. Longer life expectancies, rising healthcare costs, and delayed financial independence have made this balancing act more common and more complex. For many, this can look like paying for childcare while coordinating a parent's medical care or helping an adult child financially while trying to stay on track with personal savings goals.

Why it's Challenging

Being in the sandwich generation often means juggling competing priorities:

- **Financial strain:** You may be contributing to college tuition, childcare, or everyday expenses for children while also helping cover medical bills, housing, or caregiving costs for parents.
- **Time pressure:** Managing doctor appointments, school schedules, and work responsibilities can leave little room for your own needs.
- **Emotional stress:** It's hard to know how to divide your energy and resources without feeling like you're falling short somewhere.

Over time, these pressures can impact your own financial goals, like saving for retirement, building an emergency fund, or maintaining day-to-day stability.

Steps to Regain Balance

While there's no perfect formula, a few practical steps can help you care for others without losing sight of your own financial wellbeing:

1. **Get clear on your financial picture:** Start with a simple review of income, expenses, and savings. Knowing where you stand makes it easier to make informed decisions.
2. **Set boundaries and priorities:** It's okay to say no, or "not right now." Focus on what you can realistically support without jeopardizing your future.
3. **Have open conversations:** Talk with family members about expectations, resources, and shared responsibilities. You don't have to carry the load alone.
4. **Explore available resources:** Look into employer benefits, community programs, or government support for caregiving, healthcare, or education costs.
5. **Protect your future:** Continue contributing to retirement savings, even if it's a smaller amount. Your long-term security matters.

Being part of the sandwich generation reflects how much you care. With a clear plan and honest conversations, you can support the people who depend on you while still protecting your own financial future.

¹Pew Research Center, "More than half of Americans in their 40s are 'sandwiched' between an aging parent and their own children," 2022.

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Power of Purpose: Finding Meaning in Your Work

Feeling truly fulfilled goes beyond checking off tasks or reaching milestones; it comes from having a clear sense of purpose behind what you do. Purpose brings direction to your efforts and adds meaning to your accomplishments. It can be a powerful source of motivation, helping you navigate challenges while creating a deeper sense of satisfaction in both your work and personal life.

At its core, purpose is the connection between what you do and why you do it. When your work aligns with your values and what drives you, it becomes more than just a job, but rather something you feel proud of and energized by. This extends beyond the workplace; living with purpose can strengthen relationships, guide decisions, and create a deeper sense of fulfillment in everyday life.

Why Purpose Matters for Your Wellbeing

Purpose doesn't require a "dream job" or a major career change. It's about recognizing how your role connects to something larger than yourself. It's understanding that your contributions matter and align, even in small ways, with your values.

When your work feels meaningful, it can:

- Improve both mental and physical wellbeing
- Help you stay grounded during stress or uncertainty
- Increase motivation and engagement
- Strengthen your sense of connection to your team and organization

Instead of simply moving through your day, you begin to see how your efforts contribute to a bigger picture.

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Power of Purpose: Finding Meaning in Your Work

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Identifying Your Purpose: A Foundation for Fulfillment

Finding purpose starts with understanding what truly matters to you. This is a personal process that requires reflection and curiosity.

You can begin by:

- **Reflecting on meaningful moments:** Think about times when you felt fulfilled or proud. What were you doing? Who were you helping? These experiences often reveal what motivates you most.
- **Clarifying your values:** Consider the principles that guide your decisions. Do you value collaboration, creativity, helping others, or growth? Work that aligns with these values tends to feel more meaningful.
- **Exploring your strengths and interests:** What energizes you? What comes naturally? Discovering the intersection of your strengths and interests can guide you toward meaningful opportunities.
- **Seeking perspective:** Journaling or talking with trusted colleagues or mentors can help you gain clarity and uncover patterns you may not see on your own.

The more clearly you define your purpose, the easier it becomes to make decisions that align with your goals and create a sense of fulfillment, both professionally and personally.

For additional tools and insights on defining your purpose, consider exploring the work of [Richard Leider - Inventure - The Purpose Company](#).



How to Bring More Purpose Into Your Work

Once you have a clear sense of what drives you, the next step is connecting that purpose to your day-to-day work.

Here are a few practical ways to start:

- **Connect your role to a larger impact:** Every position contributes to a larger goal, whether it's supporting your team, helping clients, or serving your community. Instead of focusing only on tasks, try to focus on outcomes and impact. A simple mindset shift can make a big difference in how meaningful your work feels.
- **Align your strengths with your work:** Pay attention to the tasks that energize you and look for ways to incorporate more of them into your day. Volunteer for projects or adjust how you approach your work so you can use your natural strengths more often.
- **Build Stronger Connections:** Relationships at work can play a big role in how meaningful your job feels. Taking time to connect with coworkers, collaborating, and supporting one another can create a greater sense of belonging and shared purpose.
- **Set meaningful goals:** Whether it's developing a new skill, growing into a leadership role, or contributing to a meaningful initiative, having direction helps work feel more intentional and rewarding.

Bringing it All Together

Finding purpose at work doesn't require a major change. It starts with small, intentional shifts - reflecting on what matters, recognizing your impact, and aligning your work with your values.

Even small moments can reinforce a sense of purpose. Supporting a colleague, solving a problem, or making someone's day a little easier all contribute to meaningful work.

When you begin to see the connection between what you do and why it matters, work becomes more than just a list of responsibilities. It becomes a source of fulfillment, motivation, and connection, helping you feel more engaged both on and off the job.

Peaches



When you think of summer food and drink, a few classics come to mind — lemonade, hot dogs, hamburgers, and, of course, peaches. But as American as a peach may seem, its roots and rise started in China. Archaeologists have found fossilized peach stones believed to be from 6,000 BC in China. Historians have also found references to peaches in Chinese writings from the 10th century. Of specific importance to Chinese culture was the peach blossom, thought to fend off evil spirits and provide vitality. To this day, China is the world's leading peach producer, supplying half of the world's peach crop — 11 million tons of fruit per year, followed by Italy producing 1.5 tons. Comparatively, the U.S. only provides one ton of peaches annually.

Another fun fact: nectarines are a spontaneous variety of peach. They are simply characterized by the lack of fuzz on their skin. Therefore, peaches and nectarines are genetically equivalent and share several nutritional benefits:

- **Improved digestion:** Peaches contain both soluble and insoluble fiber. Soluble fiber actually slows the digestive process in a good way and helps stabilize blood sugar. Insoluble fiber aids in motility and helps prevent constipation. Eating both the skin and the flesh of the fruit can maximize your fiber intake.
- **Decreased inflammation:** The plant-based micronutrients and prebiotics that are found in peaches can decrease inflammation, which can, in turn, decrease your risk of many chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

- **Stronger immune system:** The fuzzy skin and juicy flesh of peaches contain powerful antioxidants, including vitamin C, polyphenols, and carotenoids. These compounds fight cell damage and can help protect your body against aging and illnesses.
- **Healthy eyes:** Peaches are a moderate source of beta carotene, a red-orange pigment found in fruits. The body turns beta carotene into vitamin A, an essential vitamin that's important for healthy vision. Beta carotene is also great for a strong immune system and healthy skin.

Keep It Fresh

If you find yourself with a perfectly ripe peach and you're just not ready to eat it just yet, put the peach in the fridge in a loosely sealed plastic bag (such as a thin produce bag from the store). The colder temps of the refrigerator will slow down the fruit's natural ripening process, keeping your peaches ready to eat for up to about five days. However, it's important to note that the cold air can dehydrate the peaches, so watch out for wrinkles. If you notice wrinkles on a refrigerated peach, you should try to consume it as soon as possible. To freeze your ripened fruit, lay sliced peaches out in a single layer on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Freeze until solid and then transfer the frozen peaches to a freezer-safe bag, removing as much air as possible before returning to the freezer.

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On the Menu: Peaches

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Five-Minute Healthy Peach Frozen Yogurt

With the sweetness of peaches and the protein in the Greek yogurt, this could be a dessert, a snack, or the perfect sweet addition to a summer meal.

Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh peaches, frozen solid or 1 (16 oz.) bag frozen peaches
- 3 tablespoons agave nectar or honey
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt (Greek, non-fat, whole or dairy alternative)
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Add the frozen peaches, agave nectar (or honey), yogurt, and lemon juice to the bowl of a food processor or high-powered blender. Process until creamy, about five minutes. Serve the frozen yogurt immediately or transfer it to an airtight container and store it in the freezer for up to one month.

If you like it sweeter, opt for the vanilla extract and additional agave/honey. If you want it more tart, up the lemon juice and reduce the sweeteners. While it's naturally gluten-free, this dessert can be easily dairy-free with the proper yogurt selection.

Recipe yields four servings.

Adapted from JustaTaste.com

Nutrition Information

Per Serving

Calories	183
Total Fat	2.5g
Carbohydrates	31.1g
Sugar	31g
Fiber	2.4g
Protein	11.6g



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