



Fueling Your Body for Better Health

Healthy foods offer a wide variety of nutrients to fuel your body and support vital bodily functions.

Consuming healthy, nourishing foods like those listed below provides the right mix of fuel for your unique body.

- **Plants** provide essential micronutrients. Aim for at least 5 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables each day.
- **Protein** regulates blood sugars, repairs muscles, and helps you stay full longer after meals. Incorporate high-quality protein sources into your meals, such as lean meats and poultry, fish (such as salmon and tuna), legumes (such as lentils and chickpeas), Greek yogurt, nuts, and seeds.
- **Carbohydrates** help replenish glycogen stores in your liver and muscles to be used as fuel source between meals and during physical activity.¹
- **Fats** are essential for absorbing vitamins, protecting your organs, and providing a long-lasting energy source. Focus on healthy fats like avocados, olive oil, nuts, fatty fish (such as mackerel and sardines), and seeds.
- **Fermented Foods** support a healthy microbiome and immune system, which are essential for balanced nutrition and healthy weight maintenance.²
- **Water & Electrolytes** help maintain fluid balance in your blood, which is needed for regulating blood pressure, body temperature, muscle function, and carrying nutrients throughout the body.

However, food is not the only fuel for the body. The following can also boost energy:

- **Sleep** is an often overlooked source of fuel for the body. Without sufficient amounts of rest, you may feel fatigued and sluggish. Adequate sleep supports immune function, weight regulation, and metabolism. When you fall short on sleep, a brief 10- to 20-minute nap can help you catch up on a sleep deficit.³
- **Meditation** is calming to the nervous system and can ease an overactive mind. Your thoughts can either be energizing or draining, so finding mindful-based strategies to support your mental wellbeing can also be a source of fuel.
- **Stretching** relieves muscle strain and tension to support your physical body.

Not getting adequate nutrients can trigger your body to break down stored energy for fuel, which can lead to loss of muscle and strength, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and other medical complications. A balanced eating style can help ensure you have a consistent source of fuel for your body.

1. Cleveland Clinic. Glycogen. Accessed October 12, 2024. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/23509-glycogen>

2. Jalili M, Nazari M, Magkos F. Fermented Foods in the Management of Obesity: Mechanisms of Action and Future Challenges. *Int J Mol Sci.* 2023;24(3):2665. Published 2023 Jan 31. doi:10.3390/ijms24032665

3. Sleep Foundation. "Sleep Debt: The Hidden Cost of Insufficient Rest." January 16, 2024. Accessed October 8, 2024. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works/sleep-debt-and-catch-up-sleep>