


Ask Leyla: Why is my energy so low?

Q: I am a 39 year-old female with low energy.

Do you have any ideas of what could be causing this, or how I could regain my energy?

A: There are a myriad of reasons for low energy. Here are some obvious ones: 

Are you getting enough sleep? Most adults require six to eight hours of sleep every night. Do you snore or have sleep apnea? This will cause sleep disruption and may lead to high blood pressure.

Were you diagnosed with low iron or anemia? Low energy and fatigue are common complaints among those with anemia. Even if you don't have iron-deficiency anemia, you may have low ferritin which is the storage form of iron. Best to get this checked. You want your ferritin level around 70 – 90 ng/ml.

Do you have low B12 levels? Best to shoot for the 600 – 900 pg/ml range. Check your vitamin D too since low levels can contribute to fatigue as well. Shoot for ranges over 50 ng/dl.

An adrenal function test via saliva testing (as opposed to a blood test) will reveal if your adrenals are stressed or exhausted—a common reason for low energy.

Have you had your thyroid checked? Hypothyroidism is a primary reason for low energy as well as dry skin, constipation, hair loss and depression. If you're currently taking thyroid replacement, best to have your thyroid hormone levels checked every six months to ensure your dose doesn't require tweaking.

Blood sugar imbalances can cause fluctuations in energy since it's a common symptom of both high and low blood sugar. A five-hour glucose tolerance test with insulin is the gold standard to assess this.

Barring all of the above, food allergies or intolerances and looking for toxic exposures and assessing how well your detox pathways are functioning will be key to uncovering the cause of low energy.

An assessment by a nutritionally oriented practitioner can help you uncover the cause(s) of low energy and recommend appropriate therapies for you.

To your health!