

# Foods That Fight Afternoon Slumps

When the afternoon blahs leave you slumped over your desk like an unwatered house plant, most of us reach for a supersized vat of coffee and/or a calorie-packed sugar snack. There are much better options, whether you need a quick lift to keep you from nodding out in a meeting or something to keep you going for hours.

## **WATER**

Sometimes what feels like fatigue is just dehydration (often made worse by too much coffee). Drink 8 ounces of water, take a quick walk around the block or the parking lot (fresh air is an energy booster, too), then down another 8 ounces when you get back.

## **WATERMELON**

Like cookies and candy, it's high in sugar, which metabolizes quickly, which gives you a rush. But watermelon's way healthier: Instead of guilt, you get fiber, a hit of vitamins A and C, plus all that fresh, juicy flavor for almost no calories (fewer than 50 a cup). To make your new zip last longer, eat it with some protein and a little fat, such as low-fat cottage cheese or a fistful of sunflower seeds.

## **BRAZIL NUTS**

They're off the charts in mood-lifting selenium and strong in fatigue-fighting magnesium too. Just 6 give you 4 grams of protein and healthy plant fats, a combo that will keep you going far longer than you'd think.

## **A MEXICAN BAKED POTATO**

Spuds are high on the glycemic index - that is, they give your blood sugar a quick boost, which is bad for diabetics but good in moderate doses for other people in need of an energy surge. Heap on some salsa and top with a dollop of low-fat sour cream to enhance the effect. Spicy foods are stimulating, and hot peppers wake up more than your tastebuds.

## **A FEW DRIED DATES**

They were traditionally used in the Sahara to provide quick energy to camels. Like potatoes, they're a high glycemic snack, but rich in minerals too, especially potassium. Split the dates and fill with a tad of low-fat cream cheese to slow the sugar absorption.

## **PB&J ON WHOLE WHEAT**

The all-American sandwich is also an all-round pick-me-up, thanks to its amazingly complete mix of carbs, good fats, protein, and whole-grain fiber. Just make it a one-slice foldover to cut the calories down to about 200. (For more on how good whole grains are for you - they even make your RealAge younger - take this [mini quiz](#).)