

Eating And Your Energy Levels

Eating and energy levels are closely related. Energy graphs can give you a better understanding of how your food intake affects your energy levels each day. They can also explain why you might experience symptoms like the urge to binge-eat, changes in your mood (e.g., feeling low or anxious), and difficulty thinking clearly.

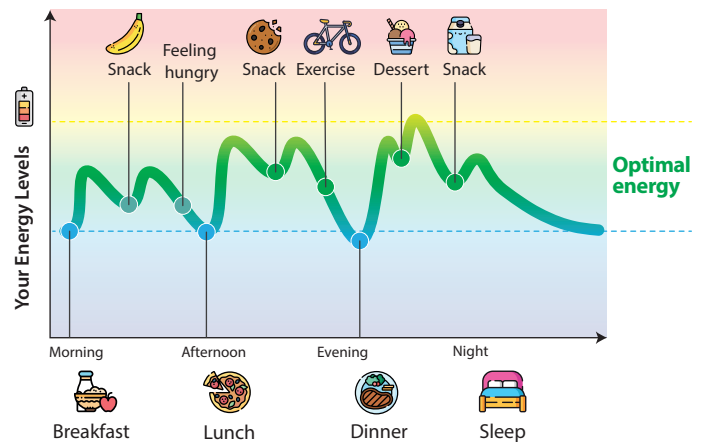
Energy graphs are based on a few nutritional facts:

- When you eat food, your energy levels go up.
- When you don't eat, or limit your food intake, your energy levels go down.
- Carbohydrates have a significant impact on your energy levels.
- Other types of food (e.g., protein, vegetables, dairy, etc.) have a smaller impact on your energy levels.
- When your energy levels get very low, your body goes into a state of semi-starvation. This affects your thoughts (e.g., thinking a lot about food, or struggling to make decisions), emotions (e.g., feeling anxious or low), behavior (e.g., withdrawing from others), and your body (e.g., feeling tired, or having cravings).

Regular eating

Eating regularly throughout the day helps keep our energy levels stable. When we give our bodies the energy they need, we can think clearly, keep our mood stable, and focus on the things that are important to us.

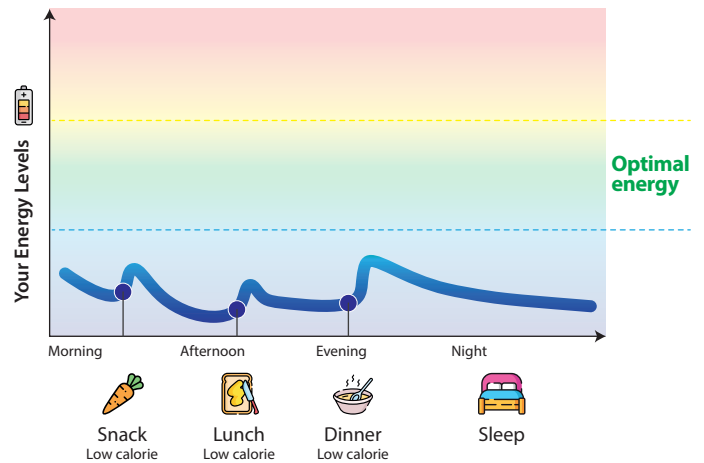
Regular eating means having meals and snacks at regular intervals, eating a wide range of foods (including regular carbohydrates), and treating food as something that is good for you and your health.



Restricted eating

Some people severely limit the amount of food they eat. This is common amongst people with anorexia nervosa. Restricted eating can relate to having only small amounts of food, not eating food for extended periods of time, or limiting yourself to low calorie foods.

Restricted eating and limited intake of carbohydrates leads to low energy levels and intense symptoms of starvation. This affects your thinking (e.g., difficulties concentrating, obsessive thoughts), your mood (e.g., anxiety, disinterest in things), and your body (e.g., exhaustion, dizziness, tummy pains).



Irregular eating

Some people eat in a way that is very up and down. This is common amongst people with bulimia nervosa. People with bulimia limit how much they eat, which is often followed by episodes of binge-eating (eating large amounts of food in an uncontrolled way).

Restriction, heavy exercise, and limited carbohydrates lead to low energy levels and symptoms of starvation (e.g., thoughts about food, hunger and cravings, and up-and-down mood). This creates a 'hunger pressure' that builds and builds, resulting in urges to binge. If binge-eating is followed by compensation (e.g., restriction or purging), you might get stuck in a cycle of under- and over-eating.

