



Caffeine Alternatives for People With OAB

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Ways to Energize Without the Need for Caffeine

Many of us have to have a few cups of coffee to start our morning and continue the day with more caffeine in our soda pop. However, if you have overactive bladder (OAB), this is not a good way to energize. Though moderate intake of caffeine (about 180 milligrams a day) is not linked to OAB, higher intakes (>330 milligrams) are known to cause urinary incontinence. Caffeine has a diuretic effect and the more you consume, the more the bladder will fill with urine. Caffeine may also cause the muscles of the bladder to contract more so than usual.

So what does a person do if they cannot indulge in their daily caffeine fix? Thankfully there are many caffeine alternatives to get you through the day. The following are suggestions that may help you energize for the day without the stimulant drug:

- **Turn it up.** Music has a way of making a person get up and move. It has been found by researchers in London that singing can increase energy in your body. It de-stresses you as well so anything that is “dragging” you down may be alleviated, leading to a better mood and increased energy.
- **Move it.** Maybe you don’t feel like exercising when you are not energetic but you can do something fun. If you do a fun activity, you will become more motivated and have a sense of sustained energy. It is a healthy way of getting it, too. This can be gardening, biking, or dancing.
- **Switch to a different task.** You have been working on your presentation for 2 hours now. You feel the slump of the day hitting you. What to do? Do something else for a while. Check your email, make a few calls, or finish other tasks you have been wanting to get to. This will start your mind with a clean slate when you get back to the project.
- **Engage your brain.** Learn something new or find something interesting to listen to on YouTube. This will light up some sleepy neurons in your brain and help you become more stimulated.
- **Brighten your day.** The Lighting Research Center in New York found that blue light brings about calm alertness. You can install blue light bulbs in your desk lamp or anywhere you need it.

- **Eat the right kind of carbs.** Avoid any products with white flour; though these types of foods in your diet will give you an energy boost, you will crash soon after. Whole grain will give you sustained energy without the sluggishness later. However, don’t overdo it. Eating too many whole grains will increase serotonin in your brain causing sleepiness. You will want to consume more of the whole grains for breakfast so it will last throughout the day. Eat more protein midday.
- **A stick of gum?** A 2012 study in the UK found that chewing gum can revitalize your body. People who chewed gum for 15 minutes were found to be more alert than those who didn’t. It is thought that the gum stimulates the autonomic nervous system, thus increasing alertness. Mint is said to stimulate nerve fibers so opt for mint-flavored gum.