

Energy After 40

A Man's Guide to Fighting Fatigue and Reclaiming Vitality

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Why Energy Declines After 40

If you've noticed that your energy isn't what it used to be, you're not imagining it. After 40, several biological processes shift simultaneously:

- **Mitochondrial efficiency drops.** Your cells' power plants become less efficient at converting food into usable energy (ATP). This is the single biggest factor in age-related fatigue.
- **Testosterone declines gradually.** Starting around age 30, testosterone decreases about 1-2% per year. By 45, this cumulative decline affects energy, motivation, and recovery.
- **Sleep architecture changes.** You spend less time in deep (restorative) sleep, even if you're in bed for the same number of hours.
- **Metabolic rate slows.** Muscle mass naturally decreases (sarcopenia), and since muscle is metabolically active tissue, less muscle means lower baseline energy expenditure.
- **Nutrient absorption decreases.** Your body becomes less efficient at absorbing key nutrients like B12, magnesium, and CoQ10.

The good news: every one of these factors is addressable. This guide covers the most effective strategies.

The 6 Pillars of Sustainable Energy

Pillar 1: Optimize Sleep Quality (Not Just Quantity)

You can't supplement your way out of poor sleep. This is the foundation.

- **Keep a consistent schedule.** Same wake time every day, including weekends. Your circadian rhythm rewards consistency.
- **Cool your bedroom to 65-68°F.** Core body temperature drop is a primary sleep trigger.
- **Eliminate blue light 90 minutes before bed.** Blue light from screens suppresses melatonin production.
- **Consider magnesium glycinate** (200-400mg before bed). It's one of the most evidence-supported sleep nutrients and most men are deficient.
- **Limit alcohol.** Even moderate alcohol dramatically reduces REM and deep sleep quality, even if you feel like you "slept fine."

Pillar 2: Support Mitochondrial Function

Since mitochondrial decline is the primary driver of age-related fatigue, supporting these cellular engines is essential.

- **CoQ10 (100-200mg daily)** — directly involved in the electron transport chain where ATP is produced. CoQ10 levels naturally decline with age and are further depleted by statin medications.
- **PQQ (10-20mg daily)** — supports mitochondrial biogenesis (the creation of new mitochondria), effectively expanding your energy capacity.

- **Alpha-lipoic acid (300-600mg daily)** — a versatile antioxidant that protects mitochondrial membranes from oxidative damage.
- **Acetyl-L-carnitine (500-1000mg daily)** — transports fatty acids into mitochondria for energy production.

Key insight: These compounds work synergistically. A multi-ingredient approach that addresses multiple mitochondrial pathways simultaneously may be more effective than any single ingredient alone.

Pillar 3: Exercise Strategically

Exercise is the most powerful mitochondrial stimulus available. The right type of exercise actually creates new mitochondria.

- **Resistance training 3x/week** — preserves muscle mass, supports testosterone, builds mitochondria in muscle tissue
- **Zone 2 cardio 2-3x/week** — 30-45 minutes at conversational pace. This is the sweet spot for mitochondrial biogenesis.
- **Brief high-intensity intervals** — even 4-6 intervals of 30 seconds once per week can significantly improve mitochondrial efficiency
- **Daily walking** — 7,000-10,000 steps. Non-exercise activity is a bigger energy factor than most men realize.

Pillar 4: Address Nutrient Deficiencies

After 40, several common deficiencies directly impact energy. Consider testing for:

- **Vitamin D** — the most common deficiency in men. Affects energy, mood, testosterone, and immune function. Target blood levels of 40-60 ng/mL.
- **Magnesium** — involved in 300+ enzymatic reactions including energy production. Most men get only 50-70% of the RDA from food.
- **Vitamin B12** — absorption declines significantly with age. Essential for red blood cell formation and neurological function.
- **Iron** — less common in men than women, but still worth checking. Low ferritin (storage iron) causes fatigue even when hemoglobin is normal.

- **Zinc** — critical for testosterone production, immune function, and enzyme activity.

Important: Get blood work done before supplementing with iron or high-dose vitamin D. Over-supplementing can be as problematic as deficiency. Work with your healthcare provider on dosing.

Pillar 5: Manage Stress and Cortisol

Chronic stress keeps cortisol elevated, which directly suppresses testosterone, disrupts sleep, promotes fat storage (especially visceral belly fat), and drains energy.

- **Identify your top 3 stressors** and address them directly rather than trying to "manage" indefinitely
- **Controlled breathing** — even 5 minutes of box breathing (4-4-4-4) measurably reduces cortisol
- **Adaptogenic herbs** — ashwagandha (300-600mg KSM-66 extract) has strong evidence for supporting healthy cortisol levels and overall vitality in men
- **Time in nature** — 20 minutes outdoors reduces cortisol more effectively than most relaxation techniques

Pillar 6: Eat for Energy, Not Just Calories

- **Protein at every meal** — 30-40g per sitting supports muscle maintenance and stable energy. Men over 40 need more protein than younger men.
- **Healthy fats** — olive oil, avocados, nuts, fatty fish. Fats support hormone production and slow-burning energy.

- **Minimize processed carbs and sugar** — the spike-crash cycle is the fastest way to tank your energy
- **Stay hydrated** — even 2% dehydration impairs cognitive performance and energy. Most men underdrink.

The 7-Day Energy Reset

Try this for one week. Most men notice a difference within 3-4 days:

Habit	Details
Same wake time daily	Pick a time, stick to it for 7 days straight
Morning water	16 oz water before coffee
30g protein at breakfast	Eggs, Greek yogurt, protein shake
20-min walk after lunch	Non-negotiable, even if just around the block
No caffeine after 2 PM	Protect deep sleep
No screens 1 hour before bed	Read, stretch, or talk instead
Magnesium before bed	200-400mg magnesium glycinate

Ready to explore supplements that support energy and vitality? Visit supplements.men for evidence-based reviews of CoQ10, magnesium, ashwagandha, and other energy-supporting supplements.

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