

Health Advice

More get-up-and-go every day

Starting the day feeling refreshed and full of energy in the morning and staying as relaxed as possible until the evening – that would be great, wouldn't it? There are some things we can do to make that happen. The start of the year is the perfect opportunity to rethink old behaviour patterns and try out some new routines. The key: the more relaxed we are, the more energy we have.

Special relaxation techniques can bring more vital energy into our everyday lives. Whether it's Hatha yoga, Tai Chi or Qigong – try out different things and see what works best for you. If you manage to take time regularly – ideally once a day – to consciously practise a relaxation technique, you'll soon notice a difference.

Hatha yoga

Yoga is an ancient meditation technique originating from India. Practised regularly, the combination of movement, stretching and mindful breathing stimulates blood circulation, improves flexibility and aids restful sleep. There are many different styles of yoga, but Hatha yoga is also great for beginners.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi is a form of martial arts which originates from China. But the movements are performed slowly and fluidly, almost like a fight in slow motion. It's not about wearing yourself out – the positive effects lie elsewhere: Tai Chi heightens our awareness of our bodies, sharpens concentration, improves flexibility and can relieve tension.

Qigong

Qigong is an ancient art of movement, concentration and breathing. Qi means life force. Through the flowing movements, combined with mindful breathing and meditative elements, Qigong helps to reduce stress and get your vital energy flowing. At the same time, it trains your sense of balance and flexibility.

Extra tip: You can easily practise Tai Chi and Qigong standing up. So they're perfect for squeezing in now and then, for instance during breaks at work.

A morning routine for a more relaxed day

If you're already rushing around in the morning, it's unlikely you'll relax as the day goes on. Stress robs us of energy. So it's a great idea to top up our energy reserves right at the start of the day by creating a regular morning ritual we can do every day. Find out which routine suits you and your working life by trying different things out. The goal: to start the day in a mindful and relaxed frame of mind. Make your new routine a fixed part of your morning, like brushing your teeth – you don't skip that, after all. Here are a few ideas for an energising morning routine:

- A relaxed morning starts the evening before: go to bed on time! Seven to eight hours of sleep is ideal. Getting a good night's sleep is the first step towards having more energy the next day.
 - The snooze button is tempting, but only delays getting up. So move your mobile phone or alarm clock so far away that you have to get out of bed to switch off the alarm.
 - Get up and let light in! Open the curtains, pull up the blinds – daylight tells the body that the night is now over.
 - Open the window wide and take several deep breaths of fresh morning air.
 - Create a pleasant morning environment: a scented candle in the bathroom, a pre-heated towel, a nicely laid breakfast table (prepared the night before). The main thing is it brings you joy.
 - The body loses a lot of fluid at night: drink a glass of warm water. This will help you stay hydrated and is good for your stomach.
- Even if there's not much time in the morning, try setting your alarm clock ten to fifteen minutes earlier. Use the extra time for a short exercise session: whether it's Hatha yoga, Tai Chi or Qigong – exercise in the morning gets the circulation going and the energy flowing.
 - Alternatively, you could use the minutes you gain to read a few pages of a book or to meditate.
 - Have a delicious, leisurely breakfast. If you're not hungry yet, allow yourself a cup of hot tea or coffee. The main thing is to make yourself comfortable and enjoy every bite or sip without stress.
 - It's tempting to look at your mobile phone as soon as you wake up. Don't do it. You can read your e-mails later. Make the morning a mobile-free zone and settle into the new day first. So you can start your day relaxed – and stay that way.



Find peace of mind with the 7Mind app – and simply achieve more balance.

Meditation is the key to more concentration and creativity.

With the free 7Mind app for BARMER members, you can take short, targeted breaks to regain your focus and successfully master stressful situations.

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