

Be Well, Be Successful

Making small changes to your routine can have a profound influence on energy levels and general health, which will naturally boost performance in the office. Nutrition and environment are two things to be aware of—but always consult a doctor regarding any diet or lifestyle changes.

By Tim Garrett, Founder of Corporate Wellness Co.



Corporate wellness has fast been gaining popularity across the world, with some forecasts estimating that it will become an \$8 billion market globally by the end of 2018. Although still small, the MENA corporate wellness market has experienced 40% year-on-year growth over the last three years, picking up \$11 million of the market share.

Working in the Middle East has its own unique and varied stressors for the businesspeople based here, including being away from extended families and long working hours. However, one of the biggest issues is stress. This can come from one or a combination of sources, and lead to problems such as an underactive thyroid, hormone imbalance or adrenal fatigue.

If you can reduce your stress levels and control your diet, your healthy hormones will increase, and that's the foundation for a long, healthy life, free from disease. The inherent problem is that business leaders in the region are doing the exact opposite, and that can have a profound effect on one's energy and focus, as well as making them vulnerable to anxiety and depression.

Keeping an eye on and taking care of your thyroid is a powerful tool. The thyroid hormones are incredibly protective, acting as a switch for nearly every health process in the body. A low thyroid, typically known as chronic fatigue syndrome, can be a real problem. However, it is possible to boost thyroid hormones through a controlled diet. There are certain must-have ingredients that should be consumed to produce adequate thyroid hormones. Without them a process can begin whereby the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline are produced, which kill the body's tissues while creating sugar to manufacture thyroid hormones.

To begin with make sure you get enough cholesterol from saturated fat. Great examples of this are beef, lamb, milk, eggs, cheese, coconut oil, butter and ghee (especially if organic because the fat in these foods will be clean and nontoxic). Also, getting enough quality, easily-usable sugar is an energy boosting practice that can deliver quick results. When sugar is used by cells without causing an unhealthy blood sugar spike or a build-up of endotoxin in the gut, it can boost energy and performance. Three great sources of easily-usable sugar are high-quality orange juice, red grape juice and tropical fruits. These juices not only have a lot of easily-usable sugar, but also potassium, which can be more powerful than insulin in helping the body use sugar effectively. Enough protein—around 80 grams a day (equivalent to two chicken breasts)—from a source that doesn't cause an overproduction of endotoxin in the gut is another essential ingredient, with the best sources being gelatine, beef, lamb, milk, eggs or cheese.

The right nutrients are the building or repair blocks for a body that is bombarded by stress all day, but there are also some external factors that can be considered to create a healthy and happy office. The outdoors and activity are vital, so get a view of nature or the outside world if possible or go for a walk at lunchtime. If this is not possible, having pictures of nature, the desert or animals in the office has been shown to boost productivity and decrease sick days; natural materials like green walls and exposed wood have been shown to have the same effect. And stimulate exercise by putting signs near the entrance to the stairs encouraging their use. **P**