



## MEDIA RELEASE

An initiative by the  
Consumer Education Project of Milk SA

# Why dairy for all-day focus and energy



We all know how it goes. It's another crazy-busy day, and just when we need sharp focus and steady energy, we start to feel that dull slump coming on. Suddenly, we're reaching for an extra-strong coffee or something sweet for a desperate pick-me-up. This might help for a moment or two, but that quick fix often leads to your slump becoming a full-blown crash.

According to Maretha Vermaak, Registered Dietitian at Rediscover Dairy, what we need here is a shift in mindset. "Instead of turning to caffeine or sugar as a fast but empty remedy, we could be eating in a way that supports sustained energy," she says. "Sustained energy is critical for everyday focus, performance, appetite control and balanced nutrition. When your energy is properly balanced, you're less likely to experience dips in concentration or fatigue. You also reduce cravings for quick-fix snacks and overeating. We achieve sustained energy through both our daily life-style habits and

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our food choices. Certain foods such as high fibre, complex carbohydrates, good quality protein and nutrient-rich dairy play a vital role in naturally sustaining our energy over the busiest of days."

## How to fuel yourself for longer

The first step to achieving steady energy is smart eating habits. If you often experience energy slumps and crashes, you might reconsider having the three traditional meals a day. Instead make smaller, more frequent micro-meals using nutrient-rich ingredients a daily habit. Look for ways to be active as often as possible on working days, by taking the stairs, a break for stretches or a quick walk to refresh your mind and help regulate your energy.

The second step is to choose the right mix of foods by making tasty combinations of nutrient-rich foods to slow your digestion, leaving you full for longer and helping your energy to last longer.

Dairy products are excellent grab-and-go snacks. Flavoured milk, smaller portions of milk and maas (500 ml), yoghurt and drinking yoghurt can all be enjoyed on the run.

For example:

- Protein from milk, yoghurt, maas, cheese, eggs, legumes and lean meats
- Healthy fats from nuts, seeds and avocados
- Fibre-rich, slow-release carbs such as fruit, vegetables, legumes and whole grains



## Dairy's important role in sustained energy

Milk, yoghurt, maas and cheese naturally provide the nutrients that help keep energy levels stable. Maretha explains, "The high-quality protein in dairy, which is so important to building and repairing your body, also slows digestion and helps you feel full. The carbohydrates in dairy have a low Glycaemic index (GI), while dairy's unique spectrum of vitamins and minerals such as magnesium and calcium support energy metabolism. This means that dairy foods help slow down the release of energy into your bloodstream and keeps it steady for longer.



### Easy dairy-based snack ideas to keep you going include:

- Yoghurt Breakfast Bowl - plain yoghurt with sliced apple, unsweetened granola/rolled oats and cinnamon
- Avo and cottage cheese on a slice of low GI wholegrain bread with chilli crisp
- Chocolate and banana milk - a glass of milk blended with cocoa, some rolled oats, banana and a spoonful of nut butter
- Pineapple and spinach smoothie made with maas (or yoghurt), frozen pineapple, baby spinach leaves, chia seeds and a dash of honey

Maretha adds, "The idea is to combine a dairy food with fibre-rich and/or some healthy fats to make a smart snack that gives you sustained energy."

## Avoiding the day's energy highs and lows

Sugary snacks and drinks, as well as refined, processed carbs cause a rapid spike in your blood sugar. This is significant concern for people who are diabetic or pre-diabetic, but it's not actually good for anyone if it's a regular habit. Do your best to avoid foods and drinks with sugar listed as one of the first three ingredients on the label.



Remember that sugar as an ingredient goes by many names including dextrose, corn syrup, sucrose, maltodextrin and fructose.

Maretha says, "Sweets, chocolates, fizzy drinks and refined baked goods may give you a short-term energy boost and an overload of simple sugars. They often leave you feeling more tired and hungry later. The rollercoaster of energy highs and low throughout the day impacts not just on your body, but your mental performance and emotional well-being. When it comes to energy, slow and steady truly wins the day."

On 1 June 2025, World Milk Day offers a global moment to appreciate the many benefits of affordable and accessible milk and dairy. So, whether you're packing a lunchbox, needing a midday brain boost or recovering from an evening workout - milk, maas, yoghurt and cheese are there to help you not only go the distance, but to find that prized balance in your everyday life.



For dairy ideas and recipes join the Rediscover Dairy Facebook page: :  
[www.facebook.com/RediscoverDAIRY](https://www.facebook.com/RediscoverDAIRY)

For find out more about dairy's role on healthy diets, visit [www.rediscoverdairy.co.za](http://www.rediscoverdairy.co.za)