



3 EASY WAYS TO BOOST PERFORMANCE AND FEEL GREAT

By Carlene Murray

Life as a REALTOR® is fast-paced, multifaceted, and demands the ability to work under pressure day and night. Even with steely determination, expert savviness, and honed skill, at times, sacrifices abound. A day carefully planned often drastically pivots, sacrificing personal and family time, self-care, exercise, and even eating. When on-the-go and without preplanning, many times our go-to food choices are fast and convenient, or we simply skip a meal. Skipping breakfast, grabbing a burger and fries midafternoon, powering up with a soda, or eating just a big lunch or dinner directly impacts our blood sugar levels, affecting not only our body but greatly impacting our thinking, performance, and our mood.

Have you ever felt yourself in that foggy, “food coma” state after a meal? Then you’re familiar with the lethargy and maybe even the

irritability that follows. If not, maybe you’ve witnessed this in a family member or coworker suddenly feeling “hangry.” Feelings of fatigue set in; a nap is in order, our thinking, memory, and processing are not as sharp, and often we may feel agitated and maybe even anxious. This is the result of delaying our body the fuel of food and then overloading it with foods that cause our blood sugar to spike then crash.

A spike occurs when there is too much sugar in our blood. It occurs when we’ve eaten too many calories and/or carbs in a meal. In this state, usually one to two hours after a meal, our blood sugar elevates and the body stores

▶▶ health & wellness

fat. Often, in this stage, we feel tired, experience “brain fog,” and sometimes even depression-like symptoms.

A crash occurs when our blood sugar is too low. This occurs when we skip a meal, restrict calories or carbs, and/or exercise on an empty stomach. In this state, our blood sugar drops and our body begins to burn muscle, holds onto our fat, our energy crashes, and cravings increase. In this state, symptoms are often irritability, anxiety, mood swings, and “hanger.”

Ideally, to maintain optimal energy, maximize cognitive functioning and problem solving, sustain emotional stability, maintain memory and, ultimately, balance mood, it is essential to stabilize blood sugar levels throughout the day. In this optimally functioning state, our body releases fat, protects our lean muscle, eliminates cravings, increases energy, and elevates our mood.

All this to say, “Eat better to feel better.” With just a few simple changes in our food choices, meal timing, and understanding of how and when our body requires nourishment for optimal performance, we can stabilize our blood sugar and enhance every function of our body, our mind, and how we navigate life.

Here are 3 easy ways to maintain blood sugar throughout the day:

- 1. Eat in threes.** At each meal, combine one portion of a protein, one portion of a carb, and one portion of a fat. (In my coaching, I refer to the size of your palm as a way to measure out a serving size.)
- 2. Eat within 45 minutes of waking.** Yes, even if you are not hungry. After an overnight sleeping “fast,” eating breakfast signals to the body that it is not starving. It regulates blood sugar, and the body can then begin to release fat and not hold on to it. This one change can dramatically improve metabolism and blood sugar levels throughout the day.
- 3. Eat every three hours.** Shoot for timing meals: morning, midmorning, lunch, midafternoon, and dinner. If you are on-the-go, grab a low-glycemic protein bar, a handful of almonds, an apple, or pear until you can again eat in threes within three hours. Out to lunch or dinner? Select chicken, fish, or lean beef and a low-glycemic vegetable like asparagus, broccoli, or salad. Skip the coffee, with added sugars like sweetener, and dessert.

These simple shifts and changes to implement throughout the day, along with managing stress, sleeping well, and drinking enough water (half of body weight in ounces) can really move the needle on our overall health and mental outlook. Keep it simple. Eat in threes every three hours as a guide, and you will maintain good “glycemic control.” This has been associated with improvements in mood and overall mental and emotional wellbeing. With so much going on in our world, so much of it out of our control, one thing we can control and find strength in each and every day is how we choose to care for ourselves and best serve our clients, coworkers, colleagues, and those we love.



Carlene Murray is a Certified Health/Wellness & Life Coach, Nitro Nutrition health pro, and owner of

Board30 Naples, a unique full-body approach to fitness specializing in HIIT resistance band training. Also a Florida REALTOR®, Carlene brings her passion to *Real Producers*, serving her clients and community to help others achieve optimal health and wellness of mind, body, and spirit. Carlene offers both private, one-on-one coaching programs, as well as group/corporate team coaching and instructing sessions at her Board30 studio, located at The Shoppes at Vanderbilt.

CarleneMurray.com
Board30Naples.com
239.260.5653