

Sugar Shock

It's 3 p.m. You're getting sleepy. Can the latest "super" snacks perk you up?

From: Issue 100 | November 2005 | Page 101 **By:** Melissa Korn

Your eyes are so glazed that you look like you're in a coma: It's time for your daily episode of fatigue. Mine comes around 2:45, and I can shrug it off by 3:30, but for those 45 minutes, I need an energy kick. According to market researchers Mintel International Group, more than 900 new energy bars alone have been introduced since 2001. Does anything work? We dove in, and asked nutritionist Heidi Skolnik, who works with the New York Giants, to add her two cents.

Solids

Jelly Belly Sport Beans (yes, from the jelly-bean maker) contain 120 milligrams of electrolytes, 20% of your daily requirement of vitamins C and E, and 25 grams of carbs (mostly sugar). **Ruth's MacaPower Bar** contains powdered maca root, the "Incan superfood," as well as hemp seed to "support healthy endocrine and immune systems and to increase stamina and overall well-being." My control was that vending-machine staple, a **Snickers** bar.

Effect: The tart jelly-bean flavors gave my mouth a kick, but that's it. At least they didn't taste of dried tree bark like the maca bar. The Snickers didn't affect my energy, and it's not exactly a healthy snack.

What the nutritionist thinks: "If you're not active, you should watch your intake of sodium, one of the added electrolytes in Sport Beans. Go for regular Jelly Belly Beans." Hemp is a "good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E, fiber, and protein." She had no comment about maca.

Liquids

Airforce Nutrisoda's Energize flavor, with mandarin and mint, is a potent cocktail of L-Carnitine, ginseng, taurine, caffeine, and 100% daily value of nutrients and vitamins such as B6, B12, riboflavin, and thiamine. **FUZE Slender Energy** (passion-fruit flavor) disturbingly included Super Citrimax weight-loss supplement, along with vitamin C, chromium, taurine, caffeine, and L-Carnitine. My control: a **Diet Coke**.

Effect: The Nutrisoda had a mild, refreshing taste that won me over, and I was also energized enough to last through the day. That got me hooked. I got a little jittery, but it was definitely manageable. With FUZE, I had no physical reaction, except the need to use the bathroom because the bottle was so big, but the ingredients made me nervous. I felt like a Luddite trying Diet Coke at 3 p.m., but it helped.

What the nutritionist thinks: "Most weight-loss supplements don't deliver, or are temporary stimulants