



# Afternoon Caffeine Cut Challenge

Stop caffeine intake after mid-afternoon to improve your sleep patterns

## CHALLENGE DESCRIPTION:

Welcome to the Afternoon Caffeine Cut Challenge! If you're looking to improve your sleep, you've come to the right place! Over the next 14 days, you will gradually reduce your caffeine intake, focusing on stopping all caffeine before noon. By making this simple adjustment, you'll discover the incredible benefits of uninterrupted, restful sleep.

This challenge is focused on stopping all caffeine by 12pm, if you're looking to cut back on caffeine throughout the day, start with the Caffeine Cut Back challenge.

## WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF CAFFEINE?

During the mid to late afternoon, your circadian rhythm (your body's internal clock) naturally dips, signalling that time for rest is approaching. Often referred to as the 'afternoon slump', many people struggle to stay motivated and focused during this natural energy low. Caffeine is a convenient way to pull your body back into an alert state, but at what cost?

The research on caffeine and sleep is endless – there is no questions about it, caffeine, especially when consumed too close to bedtime, has disruptive effects on your sleep. Research suggests that caffeine consumption should be stopped around 8 hours before bedtime. Some studies suggest 6 hours before bed while others err on the side of caution and consider 10 hours the safest bet. Ultimately, the exact timing varies person-to-person – a good rule of thumb is to stop all caffeine after lunch.

### Cut back gradually

If you regularly drink caffeine throughout the afternoon, start by slowing down consumption by 4pm and work backwards. Move your target cut-off time forward an hour every day or so. While you're making these adjustments, use the guided sleep diary below to keep track of how your new caffeine habits have helped improve your sleep.

# AFTERNOON CAFFEINE CUT

## Elevate your energy levels naturally

When your energy levels start to dip by the afternoon, pick things back up with these simple tips.

1. **Stay hydrated:** Staying hydrated will help energize your body and hopefully combat the need for caffeine in the first place. If you're dehydrated, it's common to feel tired or low energy – keep a reusable water bottle on your desk or in the car with you to make sure you have an easy option to quench your thirst!
2. **Get moving:** Even short periods of physical exercise can have a huge impact on your energy levels. Light exercise releases endorphins, increases blood flow to the brain and helps you feel energized – without the need for caffeine. When you feel yourself reaching for a caffeinated drink try taking a walk outside or stretching instead.
3. **Have a snack:** While it can be tempting to replace your caffeine hit with a sugary treat, high-sugar snacks will spike your blood sugar and only you're your energy levels worse after the initial sugar-high wears off. You're better off with a healthy balanced snack to provide you with sustainable energy to get you through the afternoon. Try something like:
  - Fresh or dried fruit with nut butter
  - Veggies and hummus
  - Greek yogurt and berries
  - Cheese and crackers
  - Popcorn

## THE CHALLENGE

For the next 14-day track your sleep using the diary template below. Notice how your sleep changes or improves as you adjust your caffeine cut-off time. Use your sleep as a guide – do you need to continue stopping caffeine by 12pm or if your body is comfortable having caffeine at 2pm or 4pm once you've completed your challenge?

By diligently tracking your sleep, you'll gain valuable insights into your habits and made strides towards reducing your caffeine dependence!

# AFTERNOON CAFFEINE CUT

## AFTERNOON CAFFEINE CUT CHALLENGE SLEEP DIARY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Time I went to bed: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Time I fell asleep: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of times I woke up during the night: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Total sleep duration: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Quality of sleep (scale 1-10): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Dreams (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

7. Time I woke up: \_\_\_\_\_

8. How I felt upon waking up: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Energy levels throughout the day (scale 1-10):

- Morning: \_\_\_\_\_

- Afternoon: \_\_\_\_\_

- Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Caffeine intake (type and amount): \_\_\_\_\_

Eg: 8:00 AM: 1 cup of coffee

11. Physical activity: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Nap (if any, and duration): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Notes/Comments:



# Congratulations on completing the Afternoon Caffeine Cut Challenge

The journey of wellness is ongoing, and each step, no matter how small, is a victory to be celebrated. Keep pushing forward, embracing each day as an opportunity to live your best life.

