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The Real Reason You're Always Cold

Yes, it's freezing out, but if you find yourself refusing to go anywhere without the throw blanket wrapped around you, it might not just be your husband's sneaky habit of turning the thermostat down — one of these ailments could be throwing your internal temperature for a loop.

By Holly Corbett

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Your thyroid is stuck on slow mode

The thyroid gland controls metabolism, and if it's underactive, you may be chilly more often than not. "Standard blood tests miss low thyroid in about half of people," says **Jacob Teitelbaum, MD**, author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* If the test comes back normal, but you're still having trouble, you may want to ask a holistic doctor for a second opinion. He or she may try prescribing thyroid medication anyway to see if it works. Find a board-certified doctor [here](#).

You're not getting enough iron

Iron is needed to deliver oxygen to your cells for energy, and low levels could explain why you're feeling cold. "If you're not making enough energy because of low iron, your thermostat may get stuck and can't be turned up high enough, so you feel cold," says Dr. Teitelbaum. Ask your doc for a ferritin blood test and make sure your levels are over 60 — even though the normal range is said to start around 18 — to ensure that you have adequate iron. You can boost levels in your body by eating iron-rich foods such as grass-fed red meats, liver, and oysters, as well as by taking over-the-counter supplements.

You're skimping on sleep

Not getting adequate rest screws with your nervous system, which helps to regulate body temperature. "In the pre-Internet days, Americans slept nine hours a night," says Dr. Teitelbaum. "Today, we average less than six-and-a-half." To find out how much sleep your body needs, note how long you snooze without setting an alarm clock on a Sunday, or a day when your kids aren't going to wake you up.

You have poor circulation

If your hands get achy or tingly anytime you're outside for long periods — like at your son's fall football game — you could have Raynaud's Disease. "This happens when blood vessels and smaller arteries that supply blood to the skin constrict and limit circulation in your extremities," says Dr. Teitelbaum. "Another clue you have the condition is if your fingers get white when you put them in a freezer. Taking magnesium can help ease symptoms."

You have a fungal infection

"Having a candida fungal infection can put so much stress on your system that it disrupts the hypothalamus, the body's master gland that's also linked with temperature control," says Dr. Teitelbaum. Besides being cold, some not-so-sexy symptoms of a candida infection are a spastic colon and sinusitis problems, such as post-nasal drip. "To help get rid of candida overgrowth, take probiotics and starve the little buggers by eating no more than 100 calories — or 25 grams — of sugar a day," says Dr. Teitelbaum.

You're suffering from an energy crisis

Unless you have no husband, kids, job, or family, your life is probably full of the dreaded s-word — stress. While worrying is totally normal, hardships like divorce or job loss may put more stress on your body's master gland, known as the hypothalamus, than it can handle. Even low-grade, long-term stress — like juggling a full-time, high-pressure job while raising kids — can wear it down over time and cause the fuse to blow, weakening all the other body functions that the hypothalamus controls, such as the metabolism-regulating thyroid gland or the temperature-regulating autonomic nervous system. Many holistic medical practitioners believe that psychological happiness can affect physical energy, too, so work to raise your emotional energy by thinking like a kid again. "Keep your attention on things that feel good and say no to things that don't," advises Dr. Teitelbaum.

You're too thin

"The reason whales can swim in Arctic water is because they have plenty of blubber," says Dr. Teitelbaum. "Likewise, being too thin and lacking fat for insulation makes you more sensitive to cold." To keep nice and toasty, make sure your body mass index (BMI) does not dip below 18.5, the lowest measure in the "normal" category.

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