



What's Throwing You Off

Certain foods and on-shift habits can leave you more on edge, foggy, drained, and less steady than you realize. This isn't about dieting – it's about recognizing what's working against you during your shift.

Caffeine Stacking

You keep adding caffeine to stay alert, but it builds up in your system. That can increase tension, restlessness, and leave you feeling more on edge than focused.

Multiple Energy Drinks

Back-to-back cans push stimulant levels past the point of focus – into jitter and edge territory.

Coffee on Top of Energy Drinks

Stacking sources compounds the load. The alert feeling you want starts working against you.

Late-Shift Caffeine

Caffeine taken late doesn't just keep you awake – it stays in your system hours after you think it's worn off.

Sugar Spikes and Crashes

Sugary snacks can give you a quick boost, but it usually doesn't last. The drop that follows can leave you feeling irritable, drained, or more on edge than before you ate anything.

Candy

Fast sugar, fast crash. The energy window is shorter than a single call.

Pastries

Processed carbs spike blood sugar quickly and leave you dragging within the hour.

Sugary Drinks

Sports drinks and sweetened coffees add sugar load on top of caffeine – a double hit your system has to manage.

Skipping Meals

Going long stretches without eating can throw off your energy and focus. Your body starts running on empty, which can make everything feel harder and less controlled, including how you process stress and make quick decisions.

→ Missing Meals During Calls

Calls run long. Meal breaks get skipped. Hours pass without real fuel – and your system feels it.

→ Long Gaps with No Real Food

Spacing meals too far apart forces your body into a low-energy state that affects mood, focus, and reaction time.

→ Running on Snacks Only

Snacks are a stopgap, not a meal. Relying on them all shift leaves gaps in your fuel that add up by end of watch.

A missed meal during a long shift isn't just inconvenient, it quietly degrades how sharp you are in the moments that count.

Dehydration

Not drinking enough water affects more than thirst. It can lead to fatigue, headaches, irritability, and reduced focus during your shift – symptoms that are easy to write off as stress or fatigue when the real cause is simpler.



Little to No Water

Many officers go hours without drinking water on shift. By the time thirst kicks in, dehydration is already affecting performance.



Heavy Caffeine Without Water

Caffeine is a diuretic. Relying on coffee or energy drinks for hydration actually increases the deficit over time.



Long Hours Without Rehydrating

Extended shifts without consistent water intake compound fatigue and mental fog – especially in heat or high-activity calls.

When your fuel is off, everything feels harder.