



In Practice

WITH DR. RONALD E. GOLDSTEIN

Energy For The New Year



Ronald E. Goldstein, DDS

Clinical Professor
Oral Rehabilitation
Medical College of Georgia
School of Dentistry

*Dr. Goldstein also serves as adjunct professor of restorative dentistry at the University of Texas Health Science Center, adjunct clinical professor of prosthodontics at the Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine, Boston University, and visiting professor of oral and maxillofacial imaging and continuing education at the University of Southern California School of Dentistry. Dr. Goldstein is the author of *Change Your Smile and Esthetics in Dentistry*.*

As we begin 2003, one thing is certain—life is tough and demands a lot from us. We are up earlier and work later. Sure, you know you are tired and could use more energy, but are you aware of how the power drain is impacting the quality of your life?

Everyone needs energy that lasts the entire day. Most people desire the side benefits of vibrant living as well as sharpened concentration, enduring memory, high productivity, a bright attitude, a hopeful perspective, and stress resiliency. This is the right stuff for living effective, fulfilled lives and the foundation for a successful practice. Unfortunately, I would say that most people have not attained these goals of vibrant living.

In my work as a nutritionist and wellness coach, I see clients from all walks of life—top corporate executives, professional athletes,

homemakers—and the majority seek counseling with a similar plea, “How can I reclaim my energy levels and well being?”

Here are some of the warning signs of being controlled by fatigue:

- Do you fall into fatigue ditches at certain times of the day (eg, 3 PM)?
- Do you crave sweets or consider caffeine your very best friend?
- Do you go to bed tired and wake up tired?
- Do you have trouble thinking clearly or remembering things?
- Are you irritable or feel edgy?
- Do you have trouble losing weight or sticking to an exercise program?
- Are you picking up colds and flus more often?
- Are you spending so

much energy doing the things you have to do that there is little left for the things you want to do?

Although general fatigue may be associated with a lack of energy, declines in cognitive function, short-term memory loss, irritability, lowered immunity, insomnia, mood swings, sweets cravings, or difficulty losing weight and staying with an exercise plan are not usually linked with such a deficit. Yet, an energy void affects every part of life and certainly impacts the vitality of a dental practice.

Living life today is tough and living an energy-filled life is tougher still. What is the cause? Sometimes fatigue stems from elusive factors such as sleep problems, any number of medical conditions, the side effects of medications, or something as simple as not drinking enough water. More often the likely cause is something more predictable—chronic lack of self-care. We have innumerable demands, stresses, and obligations placed on us, yet often little supply to meet those demands. In addition to our professional lives, most of us have families, friends, community commitments, houses, pets, and hobbies which all demand attention, time, and energy we just don't have. We are underfed and underfueled and push our bodies through the day without the correct nutrition as though we are cars that can run without gasoline. We are not getting enough rest and the resulting unprocessed stress hormones lead to a host of ailments and block our natural energy production.

There are simple strategies that can help you soar above fatigue and stress, and reclaim your enthusiasm for life without quitting your job or going on a diet.

Many people reach for a drink when they want to boost their mood, or a vitamin, herb, or energy brew when they need more pep. Not only is this unhealthy, it is unnecessary. You do not have to look for energy in a potion or a pill. Energy is scripted into every cell of your body. What is needed is to learn how to release, not hinder, the power within.

Many factors come into play to determine the release and effectiveness of energy. A number of chemical factors, hormones, and neurotransmitters, along with lifestyle choices and conditions, all influence how strong and alert we feel at any given moment and how efficiently our energy system is operating. If you are experiencing good levels of energy, it is because this system is functioning well to keep you energized. With fine-tuning, you can further enhance your body's peak performance. Operating the inborn energy system and having it run smoothly is your best bet for achieving a sense of well-being and vitality. These 10 energizers will give you the tools you need.

JUST BREATHE

There is a big difference between breathing to live and breathing to recharge. The way you breathe can either boost or drain your energy. Many people breathe shallowly and through their mouths, which sends the body into the fight-or-flight [QA: Edit okay?] response—quickenning of the pulse and pumping adrenaline, and a chronic state



**Guest Author
Pamela M. Smith, RD**

Pamela M. Smith is a nationally known nutritionist and energy coach, culinary consultant, and best-selling

author. She is the creator of The SMART Weigh® Strategy, through which thousands of people have won back their health and energy. She has coached professional athletes and corporate executives in winning life plans. Ms. Smith's daily tips for living well can be heard on radio stations across North America and in seven foreign countries. In addition, she is the host of "High on Health," which can be seen on The Health Network by Fox. She is a frequent guest on The Today Show, MSNBC, CNBC, Lifetime Television, The Food Network, FOX News, CNN, and Focus on the Family. Ms. Smith's best-selling books include Eat Well-Live Well, Food for Life, The Good Life, The Energy Edge, and her newest, The Diet Trap. For a sample copy of Ms. Smith's Living Well newsletter, call 800.896.4010 or visit her website at www.pamsmith.com.

of stress that saps energy. Proper breathing, however, can quiet the stress responses, enhance energy, sharpen awareness, and even diminish pain. Well-oxygenated blood is better able to deliver energy-providing oxygen to the body tissues and carry away waste products.

The next time your schedule backs up, your computer freezes, or the stock market takes a wild ride, stop and just breathe. Fifteen deep breaths (inhaling energizing air in through the nostrils, deep and slow to a count of four, and exhaling slowly through your mouth) will give the most immediate boost in energy.

DRINK WATER

Thirsting for energy? You may be more than you know. Dehydration is the number one factor for fatigue, yet people constantly run low on fluids. Soda, coffee, tea, and juice are often had instead of the beverage that energizes best—water. Water is crucial for carrying energy nutrients to the cells. It energizes and hydrates overtired and overstressed muscles. How much is enough? The bottom line is a person needs 8 to 10 eight-ounce glasses of water a day. More is required with exercise and when flying or working

in climate-controlled buildings. Drink it with lemon or lime. From a sports sipper or a silver pitcher, just drink up.

EAT STRATEGICALLY

Looking for the next best thing to a youth potion? Try eating strategically, with a focus on timing, balance, and variety. When it comes to having all the energy you want and need, eating the right foods at the right time is one of the most powerful and longest lasting energy impacting choices. Throw fad diets out the window right along with mindless grazing through the day and go for the energy-edge, eat-right prescription: eat early, eat often, eat balanced, and eat lean—smaller meals every 2 to 3 hours of whole, unprocessed carbohydrates and low-fat proteins complemented by brightly colored fruits and vegetables.

SLEEP WELL

Aside from food, one of the body's main sources of fuel is sleep. Rejuvenating rest is as valuable a spoke in the wheel of wellness as nutrition and exercise. Yet many people are chronically sleep-deprived, which takes a toll on health and productivity. To seal up the energy cracks and

live vitalized lives, a person requires 7 to 8 hours of sleep. This amount of sleep is crucial to recharge of our emotional and mental batteries. Sleep is our repair shop and there is one key to effective sleep: How you live your day—in terms of good food and water, exercise, and breathing—impacts how well you sleep at night. The best sleep for replenishment is uninterrupted sleep best had by skipping the evening caffeine, nightcap, or smoke.

GET MOVING

The fastest way to feel energized is to exercise, which is a powerful tool for the release of energy. Much more than a weight-loss measure or a cardiovascular strengthener, exercise is also an active, take-charge step for cutting away at the stress response and boosting the immune system. Just 30 minutes of aerobic activity boosts a person's energy level, mood, and alertness through the release of beta-endorphins, which are naturally occurring opiates that help a person feel happy, less stressed, and more vital. The best news on the exercise front is that you do not need to beat yourself up in a gym to boost energy. Just get moving. Even a short, 10-minute

walk will do the body good. Three 10-minute sessions a day will result in the accumulated exercise time that aerobics research from the Cooper Institute [QA: **Where is the Institute located?**] has proved to provide tremendous health and stress-defusing benefits [QA: **Please provide a reference for this statement.**]

NOURISH YOUR BRAIN

Mental energy is a critical part of our whole energy picture. To have “what it takes,” your brain is in need of certain nutrients that sharpen the mind and bring clarity and alertness to thinking and creative abilities. Glucose is the prime fuel for the brain, so a steady stream (every 2½ to 3 hours) of whole, unprocessed carbohydrates that are energy and nutrient rich is the best way to keep the brain nourished for peak performance. Whole grains are not only rich in carbohydrates, but also loaded with B vitamins and magnesium, which are vital fuel carriers that take the glucose across the brain's blood barrier. Vibrantly colored fruits and vegetables are valuable sources of phytochemicals and antioxidants that protect the body and brain from aging and disease.

If you are in need of extra brainpower in the afternoon, have a real power lunch—fish. Fish food really is brain food not only because of Omega-3 fatty acids, but also because of being power-packed with tyrosine, an amino acid that does wonders for memory, alertness, and concentration.

MANAGE YOUR MOODS

Rather than letting your moods manage you, seal up the energy leaks caused by mood swings through techniques that short-circuit negative emotions, thought patterns, and downward swings. Cultivating a positive perspective is key, along with stabilizing the brain's neurochemistry by keeping it fit and fueled. Eating well and exercise are the dynamic duo for beating bad moods. Get into the light. Going outside, even when the skies are gray, provides a lift that lasts.

ENERGIZE YOUR DOMAIN

You might be surprised to learn that what surrounds you in your living space and workplace can make all the difference in your energy response. This is not folklore, it is science. Light, color, noise, and aromas all have the power to both exhaust or energize you. Simple techniques such as changing the light bulbs from cool fluorescents to warm, full-spectrum incandescents, stopping for fresh flowers, soaking in the sun, or turning on some music can stop the energy drain of your day and power-boost you out of fatigue ditches.

TAKE TIME-OUTS

Remember this—more breaks, more breakthroughs. Research continues to show that when you have the most to do and feel at a loss of where the time and resources will come from, the best thing to do is to do nothing at all. To discover the reservoir of energy within, you must take the time to recharge and renew your body, mind, and spirit. Otherwise, you can become depleted, sick, and tired. Just 10 minutes of a daily diversion—a power nap, walk, or reflection—can provide a chill-out time that reenergizes. Close the door, turn out the lights, unplug the phone, and recharge.

BOOST YOUR IMMUNES

Nothing robs more from our energy reserves than illness. A strong immune system not only better protects us from infections and diseases, but also helps to keep us feeling good, looking great, thinking clearly, and brimming with energy. The immune-fighting army is strengthened with my SMART plan of self-care (Strategic eating [eating well and often], Movement, Air and water, Rest, and Treating yourself well).

Adopting these energizers will put you on the road to more energy and give you a clearer perspective to recognize the habits, activities, attitudes, and chemical imbalances (the energy neutralizers and energy vandalizers) that steal vitality. Energy is neutralized by lack of self-care (eg, not getting enough sleep,

not eating the right foods, no exercise) combined with states of imbalance (eg, negative stress, worry, hormone fluctuations, depression, and illness). The energy vandalizers are specific lifestyle choices that operate as agents of fatigue. They often come wrapped as friendly energy

(eg, sweets, fast food, caffeine, alcohol, tobacco) but wreak havoc and leave you at a deficit.

CONCLUSION

To break out of the exhaustive fatigue cycle, you simply need to start. As you focus on your energy supply and win over the forces

of fatigue, you can add productivity to your days, empower your thinking processes, and maintain a greater sense of well being. You can have the energy you need for the New Year and for life. ○