April 2011

7 Secrets of Slim People

Ever notice how some women seem to stay slim without ever stressing about missed workouts or counting a single calorie? It seems unfair—and frustrating!—but those ladies might have some secrets the rest of us can steal. Turns out, you don’t have to completely overhaul your diet or exercise regimen to see fast and impressive results on the scale. (Though if you want a great, easy-to-follow plan, register for the Drop 10 Challenge on Self.com to lose 10 pounds in just five weeks.) In fact, recent research shows that sometimes it’s little, practically effortless changes to everyday habits that make the pounds fall off fast and forever. Try incorporating some of these simple, science-backed steps into your day-to-day life—it’s your turn to become one of those “naturally” slim lucky few!

Move your workouts to the morning
Breaking a sweat before you sit down to breakfast can help you trim down faster, a study in The Journal of Physiology finds. Exercising on an empty stomach in the A.M. improves glucose tolerance, which spurs your body to shed fat.

Join the breakfast club
If you don’t already have regular morning meals, it’s time to start: Lifelong early eaters have a waistline about 2 inches smaller than that of breakfast skippers, The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition reveals. An A.M. meal may rev metabolism; plus, it may cause you to make less of an enzyme that raises cholesterol.

Become a creature of habit
Eating at the same times every day and could help you drop pounds. When mice ate at scheduled mealtimes and fasted for 12 hours at night, their liver turned on genes that burned more sugar and fat, say scientists at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California

Start with water
Downing two cups of H2O before meals helped people lose about 5 pounds more than those who said no to water, research from Virginia Tech reveals. Water is filling, so sippers ate 75 to 90 calories less. Enjoy a few cups of water while you prep a meal or before your entrée arrives at a restaurant to effortlessly keep calories in check.

Step on the scale
Dieters who weighed themselves at least weekly lost more weight than those who didn’t, according to research from the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation. Plus, the habit helped nondieters stay at a stable weight. Spotting scale swings early allows you to tweak your eating and exercise routine before pounds can pile up.

Make time for tea
Women with the highest intake of catechins, antioxidants in tea that may accelerate fat burn, gained less weight over 14 years than those who sipped less, a study in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition reveals. White and green brews have the most catechins. Get brewing!

Source: self.com

Inside This Issue:
7 Secrets of Slim People........1  Vaccines Your Child
7 Natural Ways to Sleep Needs........................................3
Better.................................................3
7 Natural Ways to Sleep Better

Americans have never been more fatigued. More than one-third of US adults routinely sleep fewer than seven hours a night, jeopardizing their health and concentration, a CDC study released last week shows. Skimping on slumber magnifies the threat of developing cardiovascular disease, the leading killer of Americans, and also boosts risk for diabetes, depression and even obesity, other CDC research shows.

More frightening fallout from America’s exhaustion epidemic: 50 percent of adults ages 19 to 29 admit that they’ve driven while drowsy in the past month, as did more than one-third of younger teens, and 28 percent of Baby Boomers, according to a National Sleep Foundation (NSF) poll released on March 7. About 5 percent of adults have actually fallen asleep at the wheel in the past month, the CDC found.

Use these 7 tips to help you sleep better.

What’s behind these troubling trends? Americans are too wired to unwind, the NSF’s 2011 Sleep in America poll survey suggests. Ninety-five percent of those surveyed spend the hour before bedtime staring at some type of screen, from the TV to the computer, video games, or cell phone, at least a few nights a week. What’s more, nearly one in ten teens are awakened nearly every night after going to bed by text messages, emails or cell phone calls. Not surprisingly, in light of these findings, 43 percent of survey respondents say that they rarely or never get a good night’s sleep on weeknights.

What’s the solution? “Very simple strategies and changes in your daily habits can powerfully improve your sleep—without pills,” says sleep researcher Alison Harvey, Ph.D., professor of clinical psychology at University of California, Berkeley.

Bask in morning sunshine.

Light, especially the sun’s rays, has such a potent effect on your body’s internal clocks that you can actually use it to reset your sleep cycle, research shows. If you tend to be night owl (like me), you may have delayed circadian rhythms. To shift to an earlier schedule, making it easier to fall asleep and wake up on time for work, force yourself to get up early and soak up as much sun as possible between 6 and 8 AM, by sitting in a sunny room or taking a walk after dawn. “Bright light in the morning cues the biology of sleep,” by influencing the timing of the body’s production of melatonin, the sleep hormone, says Harvey. “Even a cloudy day is bright enough to influence your circadian rhythms.”

Exercise regularly.

Working out several times a week enhances your overall health and improves sleep. It may also aid in relaxing after work and shedding the stresses of the day. However, you should avoid exercising within two to three hours of bedtime, otherwise you may be too revved up to rest well, cautions Harvey.

Limit caffeine, especially in the evening.

The NSF poll found that the average American drinks at least three caffeinated beverages a day, a habit that contributes to sleepless nights. And while you may feel that a glass or two of wine will help you nod off, research shows that alcohol actually impairs rest in a variety of ways, including adversely affecting REM sleep, making slumber less refreshing.

Go off the grid.

One hour before bedtime, dim the lights and sign off from technology use. The bright light from small and big screens as you surf the Web, watch TV, or check emails stimulates the brain, instead of allowing it to slow down for shuteye.

--continued--
7 Natural Ways to Sleep Better (cont.)

Make your bedroom a sanctuary for sleep. Your bed should only be used for two things: Slumber and sex. Keep your bedroom comfortable cool, which promotes better shuteye than a warm or hot room, and free of any reminders of work, which can make you feel too stressed to relax. “It’s very important to associate your bed with refreshing sleep, so if you wake up during the night and can’t get back to sleep, instead of tossing and turning, get up and go into another room. Read or try another relaxing activity, until you feel tired enough to go back to bed.”

Cover your clock. One common mistake is keeping your alarm clock next to the bed. “We did a five-year research project on clock-watching and found it creates anxiety. Often people will wake up briefly, look at the clock, then fall back asleep, only to wake up an hour later and check the time again. They then conclude that they’ve been lying awake for an hour, giving people the impression that their insomnia is worse than it actually is.”

Stick to a regular schedule, even on weekends. It’s tempting to snooze late on the weekends to catch up on the sleep you’ve missed during a hectic week. However, this habit throws the body’s clocks out of sync, points out Harvey. “If you normally get up at 6:30 AM on weekdays and sleep in until noon on the weekends, it’s like flying from California to Hawaii once a week, giving you a form of chronic jet lag, which is potentially devastating to health and well-being.” Research shows that consistently arising at about the same time every day is crucial to setting and maintaining a healthy sleep cycle.

Source: www.healthline.com

Vaccines Your Child Needs

Children get as many as 25 shots and boosters in the first 15 months of life alone. When you combine the sheer number of vaccines with an alphabet-soup-like jumble of acronyms it’s hard to keep track of what a youngster is getting—and why. Here’s a rundown of vaccines that help protect against potentially life-threatening germs. Most are required for school attendance, while some are not. (Legal requirements can vary from state to state.)

Hepatitis B
Your newborn should get this shot even before leaving the hospital, and receive another dose at 1 to 2 months and a third at 6 to 18 months. The vaccine protects against an incurable, liver-infecting virus, hepatitis B, which can be passed to a baby during childbirth if the mother is infected. This virus spreads through contact with blood or other body fluids.

DTaP
The DTaP vaccine protects against diphtheria (a germ that can form a gray or black film in the throat), tetanus (an infection that can cause muscle spasms so strong they can break bones), and pertussis (a highly contagious disease that causes a severe, uncontrollable cough, known as whooping cough). Five vaccine doses are given to children at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15 to 18 months, and 4 to 6 years. (And boosters at age 11 or 12 and then every 10 years.)

MMR
This combo shot protects against three viruses: measles (which causes high fever and a body-wide rash); mumps (which causes face pain, swelling of the salivary glands, and sometimes scrotal swelling in boys); and rubella or German measles. The first shot is given at 12 to 15 months of age and once again between the ages of 4 and 6. MMR is sometimes combined with the chickenpox vaccine into one shot.

-continued-
Vaccines Your Child Needs (cont.)

**Chickenpox**
Chickenpox, a highly contagious rash that many people remember from childhood, is caused by the varicella virus. A varicella vaccine was first licensed in 1995 and now spares future generations this itchy misery. Chickenpox infections can be especially dangerous in adults who don’t have immunity from the vaccine or haven’t had it in childhood, and can also lead to shingles, an extremely painful blistering rash.
The shot is given to children at 12 to 15 months and again between 4 and 6 years. The vaccine can cause soreness at the site of the shot, fever, and, in some cases, a mild rash.

**Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)**
“Haemophilus influenza type b is the bacterium that causes meningitis,” Meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord, is particularly dangerous for kids under the age of 5.
Hib vaccines are generally given at 2, 4, 6, and 12 to 15 months of age. Depending on the vaccine used, the 6-month shot may not be needed.

**Influenza (flu)**
Flu vaccinations are given each year starting in the fall. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends them for kids ages 6 months or older, although they aren’t required for school attendance.
Common side effects from the vaccine include soreness, redness, or swelling at the site of the shot. Fever and aches may occur too.

**Rotavirus (RV)**
The rotavirus vaccine (RV) (brand names RotaTeq, Rotarix) is given to children at 2 and 4 months of age. (RotaTeq is also given at 6 months.) The vaccine protects against a virus that is the most common cause of severe diarrhea and vomiting in young kids worldwide. About 55,000 children in the U.S. were hospitalized each year due to rotavirus before the vaccine was licensed in 2006. It is not required for school attendance.
The vaccine is in liquid form and given by mouth to babies. It may make them a bit more irritable and can also cause mild diarrhea or vomiting.

**Hepatitis A**
Kids can catch hepatitis A from sharing food or drinks or by putting contaminated food or objects in their mouths. It’s a viral infection that affects the liver, and can cause a number of symptoms, including fever, tiredness, jaundice, and loss of appetite. Children ages 12 through 23 months generally get two doses of the Hep A vaccine, with a minimum interval of six months between shots.

*Source: [www.cnnhealth.com](http://www.cnnhealth.com)*