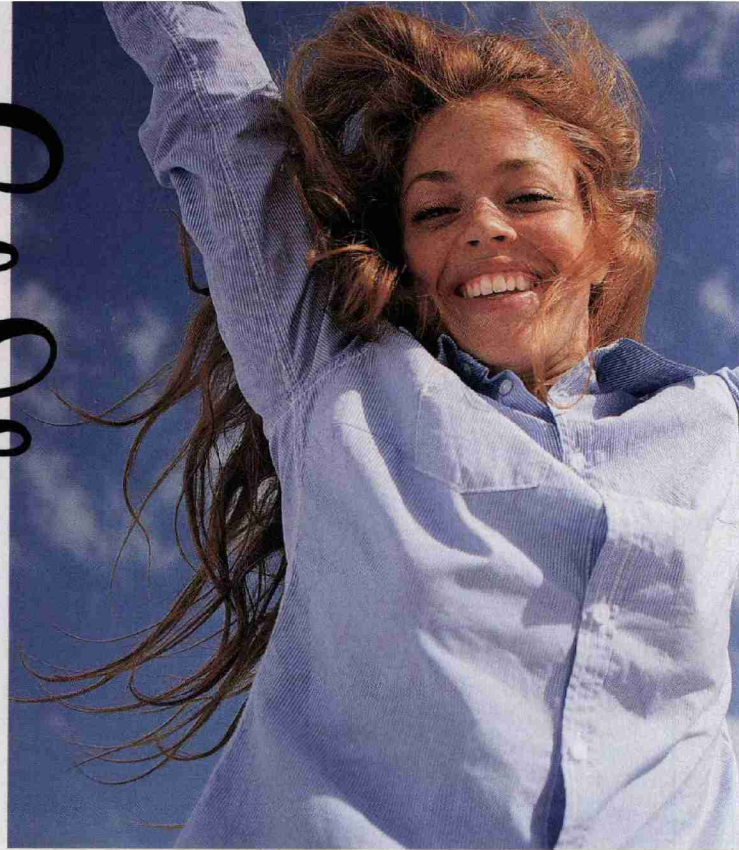
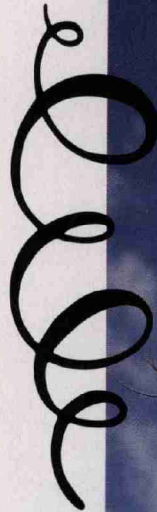
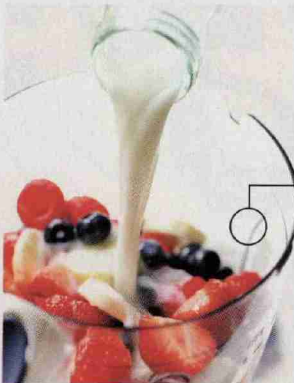


Several times a day, I fit the medical classification of zombie. It's no surprise: I gave birth a few months ago (emergency C-section!), my husband started a new job (crazy-long hours!), and we moved to a new state (in the middle of a snowstorm!). Why watch *The Walking Dead* when all I have to do is look in a mirror?

We all have our energy surges and brownouts, of course. According to Eva Cwynar, MD, an assistant clinical professor of medicine at UCLA and the author of *The Fatigue Solution*, our jam-packed lives and chronic sleep deficits are huge energy vampires, but she cites drinking alcohol, getting older, and eating badly as key contributors, too.

And now we're about to enter one of the busiest, most stressful times of the year.

I'm here to help! Think of these fast fixes as a gift you give yourself this holiday season. Most take only a few minutes (or seconds) to do, so try them and watch your spirits rise right along with your energy levels—straight on through to Jan. 1.



Fuel

Rev your engine all day long.

GO ON GREEN

Coffee is OK for your wake-up call, but drink green tea for all-day energy. As Woodson Merrell, MD, author of *The Source: Unleash Your Natural Energy, Power Up Your Health, and Feel 10 Years Younger*, explains, one cup of java can help jump-start your body's battery in the morning, but more than that may set you up for a crash. Green tea does contain caffeine (though much less than coffee), but it also features a calming ingredient, theanine, to add a little zen to your zip. "You get a gentle lift, rather than the jagged lift-and-crash of coffee," says Dr. Merrell, who likes Ito En green tea. "It's sustainable energy."

MAXIMIZE YOUR MAGNESIUM

Forty percent of Americans don't consume enough of this important mineral, according to a 2015 study published in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*. "Fatigue is a really common sign of even a slight magnesium deficiency," says Holly Phillips, MD, author of *The Exhaustion Breakthrough*. "Magnesium is involved in the breakdown of glucose from food into energy, so if your levels are even slightly low, your energy is going to take a real hit." Poor diet isn't the only problem: The hormones released when you're stressed may drain your system of magnesium, too, she adds. **Fast-acting sources of magnesium include cashews, almonds, and low-fat yogurt—all ideal for small, anytime snacks.**

PUMP UP THE PROTEIN

As tempting as it may be to grab only fruit first thing in the morning, your body needs a longer-lasting source of fuel: protein. "People say, 'Oh, I eat really well—I eat vegetables and grains and fruits,'" says Dr. Cwynar. "Well, those are all carbohydrates. If you're eating like that all day long, it can exhaust you, because your insulin is working overtime." When your blood sugar drops, you'll feel drained. An easy fix: Pair healthy carbs with protein. Add some almond butter to half a banana, for example, or mix a shot of Greek yogurt into your smoothie.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) GALLERY STOCK, GETTY IMAGES, VEER.

Rejuvenators

End-of-day ways to reset for tomorrow.

ESTABLISH EVENING RITUALS

Create a physical routine that signals your day is over—for example, change into pj pants or ditch your bra as soon as you get home from work. This starts the process of physical and mental relaxation—which takes about three hours—setting you up for restorative sleep, says Dr. Phillips. Closer to bedtime, engage in a soothing nightly ritual, like taking a warm bath with Epsom salts and lavender oil while enjoying a small cup of cocoa, suggests Dr. Teitelbaum. Do this regularly and your system will begin to decompress when you think of your evening routine.

RECONNECT WITH ROSS AND RACHEL

When you're sapped, even watching a new episode of your favorite TV show can be taxing. ("Wait, what did Olivia Pope just say? Rewind!") But queuing up reruns of old go-to shows is like wrapping yourself in a favorite cozy robe. "There's no uncertainty, because you've already seen the episode and enjoyed it," Dr. Phillips says. "You can basically sit back and let it happen." In fact, a study from the State University of New York found that after doing a mentally draining task, people who chose TV reruns over new shows performed better on a puzzle and boosted their mood, suggesting the shows had a restorative effect on the brain.

FIND YOUR FLOW

Doing more work each day would seemingly add to your stress, but not if you pursue tasks that help you achieve "flow"—the healthy psychological state in which you totally lose track of time. "All the chatter in your brain falls away, creative juices soar, and you reach an energized state of focus," explains Dr. Phillips. The benefit? In a *Journal of Organizational Behavior* study, people who experienced flow during the day reported having more energy at night. One way to find your flow is by taking time to do things you love. Most important: savor what you're doing and enjoy the moment you're in.

Boosters

Give yourself a lift when you lag.

FEED YOUR HEAD (OXYGEN)

There's a reason trampoline enthusiasts call it "rebounding." A quick dose of any pulse-raising exercise will energize you—but Dr. Cwynar recommends jumping as a particularly effective method. Ideally, you'd keep a mini-trampoline, such as the 36-inch folding model by Stamina (\$29, amazon.com), under your bed or in your office. But if that's not practical, just hop. "Even if you get up and hop three or four times, you'll increase your energy," Dr. Merrell says. Another energizing option: downward-facing dog. In this yoga pose, your brain is below your heart, boosting the blood flow to your noggin. "That keeps your brain oxygenated, helping with attention, focus, and energy," Dr. Phillips says. (For a description, check out our yoga feature on page 60.)

REBOOT YOUR TO-DO LIST

If your bandwidth is overloaded, create a "to-don't" list, identifying the tasks you can skip, delegate, or save for a later date, Dr. Phillips says. Fill those time slots with what she calls "active rest"—revitalizing, mood-lifting activities, such as getting dinner with your girlfriends or strolling through the park. "It's not only about cutting things out—it's also important to substitute energy-boosting activities in place of the energy-depleting tasks you delete," she says.

PERK UP YOUR EARS

Your body's energy meridians—the internal channels targeted during acupuncture—run through your earlobes, which means that massaging them may stimulate your system, says Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* To reverse a slump, grasp each earlobe between a thumb and index finger, and gently massage your way up and down the sides of your ears for 10 to 15 seconds.

HOW YOUR BODY'S ENERGY CENTER IS SUPPOSED TO WORK (in a perfect world, of course!)

When you sleep, your adrenal glands—your body's cortisol, testosterone, and adrenaline factories—recharge, so you wake up flush with these energizing hormones. "Throughout the day, your adrenal system is supposed to calm down," says Dr. Cwynar. "Another burst comes around 4 p.m." However, stress and sleep deprivation tax the system. That leaves you exhausted in the a.m. and so hopped up on cortisol that you can't sleep at night. Better rest (and these tips!) can help.

