

### Ask the Doctor

"Are sleeping pills safe?"

I often take Ambien to fall asleep, but now I hear sleeping pills pose a danger to women! What should I do?

Opt for a lower dose. Recently, the FDA recommended a lower dosage of Ambien (zolpidem) for women, since it takes longer to clear from their systems. As a result, it can cause daytime drowsiness, posing a safety risk, especially while driving. If you're taking Ambien 10 mg. or Ambien CR 12.5 mg., ask your doctor about halving the dose and discuss other treatment options, such as cognitive behavior therapy for insomnia.

Harneet Walia, M.D., staff physician, Cleveland Clinic Sleep Center, Ohio

#### "Are whole-grain breads healthier?"

Are breads and crackers labeled "whole grain" really the healthiest options?

Our look at more than 500 foods, including bagels, bread, chips and cereal, found that those with "whole grain" stamped on them almost always had more sugar and calories than those without the label! The problem: There are several ways to qualify as a whole-grain product. Your best bet: Read labels and choose items highest in fiber and lowest in trans fats. sugar and sodium.

-Rebecca Mozaffarian, M.S., M.P.H.; Harvard School of Public Health, Boston WW

Natural Health

Eat this to stop diabetes and heart disease!

**Great news from Johns Hopkins** researchers: Add a few blood-sugarbalancing foods to your menus, and you could cut your risk of diabetes and heart disease in half-plus fire up your energy levels 80%!

Slowing carb absorption

with eggplant
Eggplant's fiber and antioxidants slow the absorption of carbohydrates in the intestines so well that eating 1/2 cup can steady your blood sugar for two hours, say Columbia University researchers. Add thin slices of grilled eggplant to sandwiches, blend roasted eggplant with yogurt and spices for a dip, or cut into wedges, coat with breadcrumbs and bake like French fries!

#### Correcting insulin resistance with cinnamon

blood-sugar levels 15%. Tea's antioxidants slow the breakdown and USDA research suggests consuming 1/2 tsp. daily of this popular spice could cut your risk of insulin resistance 45%, doubling your body's ability to keep blood sugar on an even keel. Cinnamon's secret? It fires up insulin receptors in muscles, helping those tissues rapidly soak up blood sugar.

> **Energizing your** pancreas with cantaloupe

Sipping 8 oz. of black,

green or oolong tea

before meals can lower

One cup daily can tame bloodsugar fluxes within a week, thanks to the fruit's betacarotene, which revs your pancreas' production of insulin.

**Controlling blood** sugar with cumin

Seasoning your meals with 1/2 tsp. cumin absorption daily could steady your blood sugar in of carbs. as little as three weeks, recent research suggests. The spice prods body cells to convert excess blood sugar into fuel, says lead researcher Aarti Jagtap, Ph.D. Cumin's hot and spicy kick works well as a pepper substitute. It also enhances the flavor of meat, lentil, rice and potato dishes and other savory foods.

#### Onions help, too!

Eat 1/3 cup of onions daily, and you'll cut your risk of fatigue-triggering blood-sugar imbalances 42%, research suggests. Onions—and their close cousins shallots and scallions—are chock-full of quercetin, a compound that helps prevent insulin resistance.

-Brenda Kearns

Eating eggplant

steadies blood sugar

for hours!



## $Stay\ Young$ with $W\widehat{W}$

# The supplement that Erases years!

keeps your cells young!

"Supplementing with vitamin D reduces the breakage and shortening of telomeres, essential elements of chromosomes directly related to increased longevity," says internist Rose Kumar, M.D., author of Becoming Real: Harnessing the Power of Menopause for Better Health.

protects your bones!

"Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium, which prevents osteoporosis and osteopenia, the precursor to osteoporosis," says Dr. Kumar. Result: A strengthened spine that keeps you straight and tall for life

Want to look younger, feel more energetic and stave off disease? Take vitamin D! Experts say most of us don't get enough of this inexpensive but powerful nutrient, which offers a four-pronged punch against aging!

fights middle-age spread!

Numerous studies prove vitamin D helps your body retain muscle mass. That's crucial because muscle is an active tissue that requires a constant stream of calories to maintain it, so the higher your muscle mass, the more calories you burn and the more likely you are to avoid middle-age spread!

thwarts age-related diseases!

"Adequate vitamin D intake reduces the odds of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and several cancers, including breast cancer," says Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of Real Cause, Real Cure. His Rx: Supplement with 1,000 IUs of vitamin D3 a day.