

25 INSTANT ENERGY BOOSTERS



Too...tired...to...read...this?

Probably, if you have a job, a family, or, well, a pulse. If you feel as if you're running on empty more days than not, check out these easy strategies for filling your tank. Full speed ahead!

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1 Tackle a dreary, do-I-have-to-get-out-of-bed day with a burst of color. The Morton Salt Girl got it right in her yellow raincoat. "There are days we need a shot of adrenaline before we even get out of bed, and colors can help with that," says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute and author of *More Alive With Color* (Capital Books, \$20). "By surrounding yourself with bright colors—something as simple as an orange bathrobe or a yellow umbrella—you can give yourself that needed energy boost to face the day." In general, saturated, warm colors (the red, orange, and yellow of ROY G BIV) are considered most energizing, while cool tones (like green, blue, indigo, and violet) are calming.

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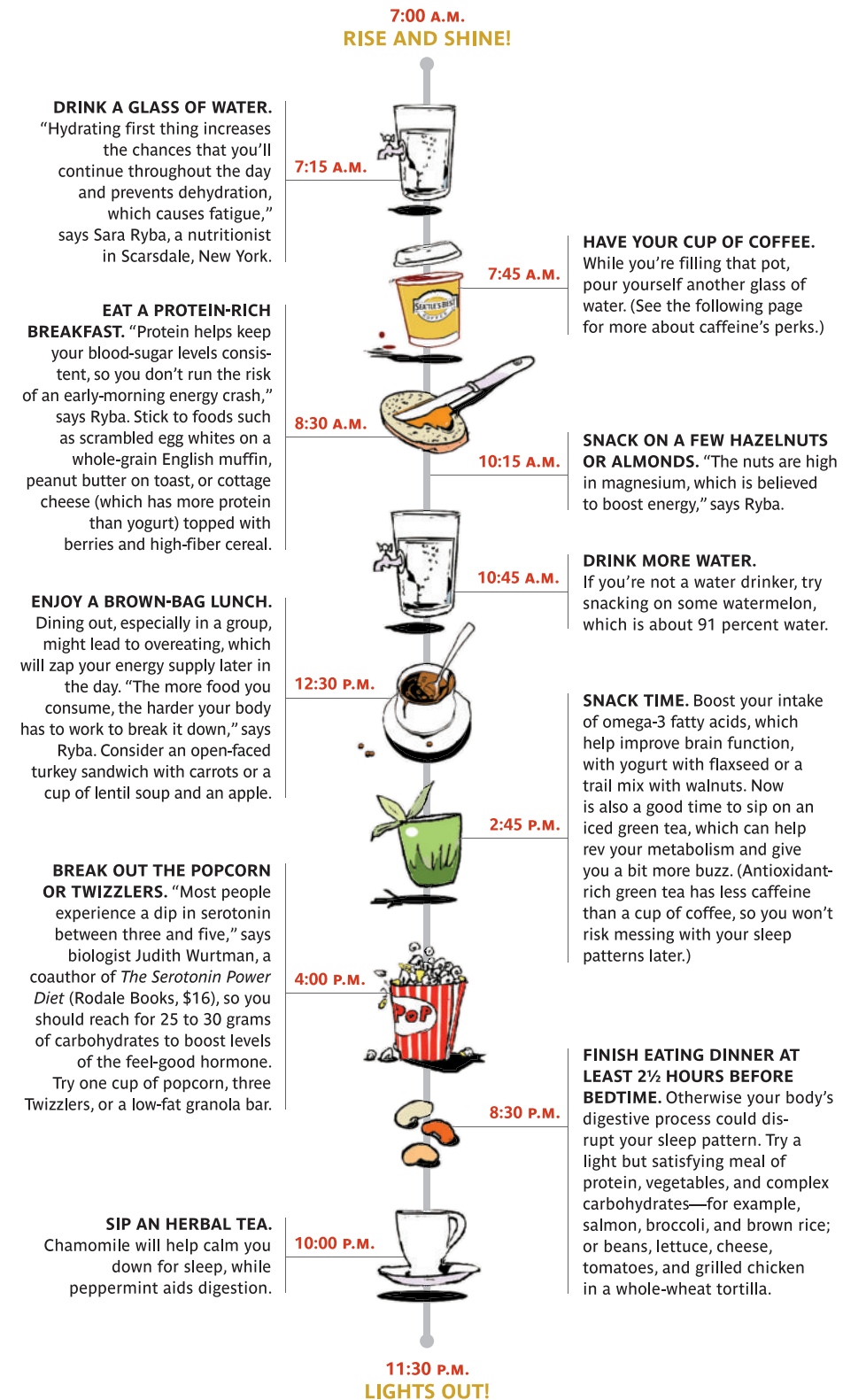
Get a whiff of citrus.

The smells of oranges, lemons, and grapefruits have been shown to be energizing, so simply add a slice or two of your favorite to a glass of water. Or introduce citrusy scents into your morning routine, since several major beauty brands—Suave, Dove, and Dial, to name a few—now offer citrus-infused, wake-up-the-body washes. For a quick midday refresher, moisten a cotton ball with a few drops of citrusy bergamot oil (Bergamot 100% Pure Essential Oil; \$7 for 10 milliliters, amazon.com) and inhale.



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FOLLOW THIS EAT-FOR-ENERGY TIMELINE. Here's how to power through your day effectively.



4 GET THE GIGGLES.

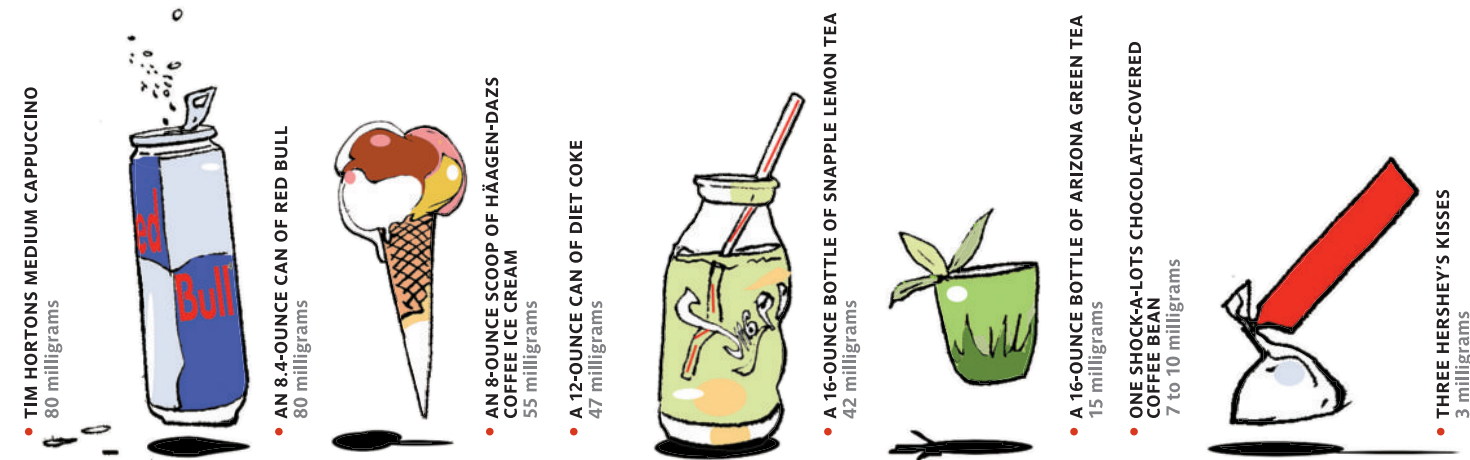
"With laughter, you reap the recharging benefits of exercise without having to spend time at the gym," says Clifford Kuhn, M.D., a professor of psychiatry at the University of Louisville, in Kentucky, who is also known as the Laugh Doctor and happens to sell red clown noses on his website (drcliffordkuhn.com). "After a good laugh, you experience a momentary surge of energy, which—in addition to reducing stress and boosting immunity—can help your body regenerate more healthful cells over time," he says. To get you started, go to funnyordie.com or huffingtonpost.com/comedy for laugh-inducing videos.

5 Dab on a jasmine-infused fragrance.

"Jasmine increases beta waves, which make you more awake and alert," says Alan Hirsch, a neurologist and the founder of the Smell & Taste Treatment and Research Foundation, in Chicago. Keep a spillproof, solid jasmine fragrance in your handbag. (Try *Mélange Perfume Melati Jasmine Solid Perfume*; \$15, melangeperfume.com.)

6 SIT UP STRAIGHT.

Another thing Mom was right about: "Poor posture puts uneven pressure on your spine and causes some muscles to work extra hard, which makes them tight and tense and so they use up extra energy," says Janice Novak, author of *Posture, Get It Straight!* (Expert Publishing, \$17). Realign your spine by simply lifting your rib cage away from the top of your hips.



7 ENJOY YOUR DAILY CUP OF JOE—OR A HEALTHY HANDFUL OF HERSHEY'S KISSES. Just don't overdo it. Experts agree that you can have roughly 300 milligrams of caffeine a day to reap its benefits fully. So if you're a coffee or tea drinker, go for it. (And while you're at it, buy one for a stranger; see No. 9, below.) But not all cardboard-sleeve cups are created equal. A grande cup of Starbucks coffee has about 330 milligrams of caffeine, while a comparable medium cup of Dunkin' Donuts coffee has half that. Above, a sampling of potential caffeine sources, listed from highest to lowest.

"BUT W-W-WHAT IF CAFFEINE MAKES ME J-J-JITTERY?" Some people are more sensitive to the beloved stimulant than others. If you notice that a daily cup of coffee leads to restlessness or irritability, try smelling coffee beans. "Sniffing the beans will invigorate you through a Pavlovian response," says Hirsch. "If you associate coffee with waking up, smelling it can induce a similar reaction." For those not willing to give up a morning tea ritual, try this: Before you make your cup of tea, steep the bag in a small amount of water for 20 seconds, then dump that out—65 to 70 percent of the caffeine is in that first dip.

8 Pop a peppermint.

Smelling peppermint "stimulates the trigeminal nerve, which stimulates the area of the brain responsible for arousal and can make you more alert," says Hirsch. (So *that's* how Santa stays up all night.)

9 BE NICE TO A STRANGER.

"Sure, the sentiment feels a little bumper sticky, but when you do something kind, your energy goes up," says nutritionist Jonny Bowden, author of *The 150 Most Effective Ways to Boost Your Energy* (Fair Winds Press, \$16). Starbucks customers at drive-throughs around the country have been paying for the next customer behind them in a grassroots acts-of-kindness movement. Find other ideas at actsofkindness.org.

10 RISE AND SEEK SUNSHINE.

"You want to use light and stimulation to wake you up for the daytime, then use dark and quiet at night," says Joyce Walsleben, Ph.D., an associate professor of medicine at the New York University Sleep Disorders Center, in New York City. "If you can go outside within 15 minutes of waking for 20 minutes and face east, even on a cloudy day, you'll get enough light to energize yourself for the day," she says.

11 OIL THE SQUEAKY LOCK.

"Think of all the little things that really bother you, like that loose doorknob that you have to fuss with every single day," says feng shui consultant Catherine Brophy (thefengshuidetective.com). "These things take energy from you that you could expend on something else." So glue the broken frame, throw out the dead plant, move the chair you always bump into, and you'll never again waste energy on groaning about them.

12 Beware of energy vampires.

Ever get off the phone with someone and instantly want to hit the sack? Then you've been bitten by what Judith Orloff, a psychiatrist and the author of *Emotional Freedom: Liberate Yourself From Negative Emotions* (Harmony, \$26), calls an "energy vampire," someone who drains your lifeblood. Here, she identifies common types to watch out for, as well as the "garlic" you can use against them.

THE CHRONIC TALKER: This motormouth never takes a breath, and standing there listening is surprisingly exhausting.

THE GARLIC: Fake a small bladder. Say, "I'm so sorry to interrupt, but I have to go to the bathroom," says Orloff.

THE SOB SISTER: A whiner who loves a captive audience, this fiend isn't interested in solutions; she just wants to vent...and vent.

THE GARLIC: Say, "I love you, but unless you want to get into solutions, I have only five minutes to listen."

THE BLAMER: This is the person who is always saying, "If it weren't for you, we wouldn't be in this mess."

THE GARLIC: Don't apologize or agree. In a firm but kind tone, say, "When you talk like that, it hurts my feelings. Please stop."

THE CONTROLLER: This vampire likes to tell you—and everyone else—what to do.

THE GARLIC: "Never try to control a controller," says Orloff. "Speak up, but don't make a big deal of it. Just state your needs. Say, 'I appreciate your advice, but I'd like to work through this on my own.'" Then say it again. With this species, repetition is key.

THE GO-FOR-THE-JUGULAR FIEND: Wildly ambitious, this vampire cuts you down to build herself up.

THE GARLIC: "Try to eliminate this person from your life," says Orloff. "If you can't, do not react to her zingers—what she wants is to see your horrified look." Instead, "visualize a protective shield around you so her toxic comments can't get into your gut."

13 FORGIVE AND FORGET.

"If you carry resentment, it's like carrying a bag of rocks," says Judy Irving, a Las Vegas-based executive coach who helps companies improve their efficiency. "Your energy is depleted because you're giving it away to the person you're resenting." Even if the forgiveness is internal but unacknowledged, it will help bring that energy back.

14 Show your hands some love.

"Take a golf ball and roll it between your desktop and your hand, from the base of the thumb, where your hand webs out, down to the wrist," says Kevin Kunz, a coauthor of *Complete Reflexology for Life* (DK Adult, \$19). "There's a really sensitive spot there. Stimulating it will perk you up," says Kunz.

15 EXHALE. Flushing out toxins helps the body run more efficiently, which also means you'll have more energy. Simply lie in bed for two extra minutes in the morning and focus on taking deep breaths, since "many of our toxins are expelled by breathing," says Jim Karas, a coauthor of *The 7-Day Energy Surge* (Rodale Books, \$16).

16 Pull your hair. No, really. "If you gently take handfuls of hair and pull the skin away from your scalp to get blood flowing to that area of the head, you can relieve a lot of potentially tiring tension," says Marlene Merritt, a doctor of Oriental medicine and a nutritionist at the Merritt Wellness Center, in Austin, Texas.



17 Do interval exercise in the morning.

"Researchers at Leeds Metropolitan University, in England, found that exercising before or during lunchtime leads to a more productive workday," says Karas. But don't spend 45 long minutes on the treadmill at one consistent pace. Bowden notes that alternating bursts of rapid activity, like running, with slower activity, like walking, over the course of about a half hour is a more energizing way to work out than endurance-focused exercise. Finally, in addition to your regular workout, one-minute sets of jumping jacks throughout the day will get your blood flowing.



18 Crank up the Michael Jackson.

And don't stop till you get enough. "Brain-imaging techniques have linked music and its effects on our nervous system to improved mood and well-being," says Karas. "Your mental and physical energy get a big boost every time you immerse yourself in music that moves you." Above, Sue Molnar, an instructor for SoulCycle cycling studios, located throughout New York City, shares some of her favorite pump-up-the-energy tunes.

1. "EVERYDAY PEOPLE," Joan Jett and the Blackhearts
2. "HOT STUFF (LET'S DANCE)," Craig David
3. "SHAKE YOUR BODY (DOWN TO THE GROUND)," the Jacksons
4. "IT'S THE SAME OLD SONG/REACH OUT I'LL BE THERE," Boyz II Men
5. "RIVER DEEP, MOUNTAIN HIGH," Céline Dion
6. "LOVE SOMEBODY" (Radio Dance Mix featuring Rick Springfield), Rick Springfield and Jimmy Martin
7. "HELLO GOODBYE," the cast of *Glee*
8. "UNWRITTEN" (Johnny Vicious Club Mix), Natasha Bedingfield
9. "UNLEASHED," Chris Classic and Nazareth
10. "THAT'S NOT MY NAME," the Ting Tings

19 Write a thank-you note.

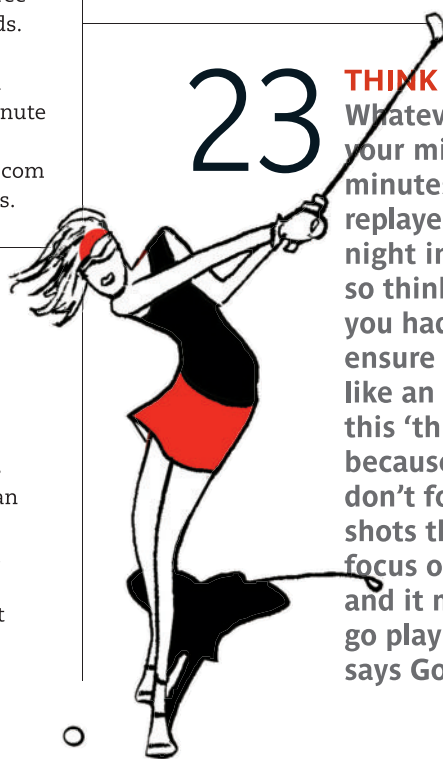
Stress zaps energy, and "it's tough to be stressed and feel grateful at the same time," says Jon Gordon, a sports and business consultant and the author of *The Energy Bus: 10 Rules to Fuel Your Life, Work, and Team With Positive Energy* (Wiley, \$22). Think of things you're grateful for (a coworker who helped on a last-minute project, a fellow mom who covered for you when you forgot all about snack day), then put pen to paper.

20 EMBRACE THE THREE-MINUTE MEDITATION.

Think of something beautiful and powerful, like a waterfall, to get the endorphins flowing, which, in turn, boosts energy levels. If you can't sustain three minutes, start with 10 seconds. "It's about stopping the cycle of frenzy," says Orloff. Need a real image? Use the three-minute Havasupai Indian Waterfall Relaxation Video on youtube.com as meditation training wheels.

21 FILL A VASE WITH FRESH FLOWERS.

A Harvard study showed that people who looked at fresh blooms in the morning reported higher energy levels for the rest of the day. Want an energy booster delivered to your doorstep? Proflowers.com is offering *Real Simple* readers a 15 percent discount from June 1 to July 31. (Go to proflowers.com/realsimple.)



22 End your shower with a burst of cold water. Your body responds more quickly to a cold stimulus than to hot, so "a quick, short blast will perk you up," says Karas.

23 THINK LIKE A GOLFER. Whatever goes through your mind during the 30 minutes before you sleep is replayed throughout the night in your dreams, so think of three successes you had during the day to ensure you wake up feeling like an achiever. "I call this 'thinking like a golfer,' because most golfers don't focus on all the bad shots they have had. They focus on the great shots, and it makes them want to go play again and again," says Gordon.

24 TURN YOUR WORLD UPSIDE DOWN.

"Any inverted pose is energizing, even just leaning over to touch your toes," says Merritt. Shut your office door and do roughly two minutes of downward dog, or if you're not a yogi, "stick your rear against the wall, put your feet two feet in front of you (just a little wider than your hips), bend your knees, and bend forward. Your back will stretch out, and you'll get a bunch of blood flowing to your head," she says.

25 Settle in for a rejuvenating night's sleep.

Three steps to winding down for a more energized tomorrow.

DITCH THE BLACKBERRY. Put away electronics and dim lights an hour before you want to hit the hay.

THINK PINK. This feminine color has been proven to have a temporary calming effect and has even been used on walls in rooms where violent prison detainees are sent to calm down. For a less permanent pop than painting a wall, try a soft pink lightbulb.

...OR BLUE OR GREEN. Cool colors are also calming, so consider curling up under sheets in these shades. Sweet, energizing dreams!

