



# Get Energized!

Quick ways to recharge your batteries **by Jennifer Matlack**

With all of life's pressing demands, it's no wonder we sometimes feel like we're running on empty. An ocean-side vacation or a spell at a luxurious health resort would no doubt replenish our weary minds, bodies and spirits. But who has the time or money? Luckily there are ways to fight the fatigue and depression caused by burnout—and they don't involve making an airline reservation or booking an appointment at a spa. *WD* readers tested these cost-effective, no-fuss tips and watched their energy soar.

## Make Lemonade

"In some studies, citrus fragrances eased feelings of depression and worry and made people happier," says Theresa L. White, Ph.D., a sensory psychologist at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York.

**TRIED AND TRUE** "I tried drinking lemonade instead of my usual morning coffee," says Weatherly Ramsdell of New York City. "Surprisingly, the tart flavor really woke me up. Now I pop a lemon Jolly Rancher candy whenever I need a midafternoon lift."

## Reach Out

Talking to an upbeat friend can provide an instant pickup. "Just don't wait until you're so sad that you can't pick up the phone," cautions

Jon Gordon, author of *Energy Addict: 101 Mental, Physical and Spiritual Ways to Energize Your Life*. "When you recognize you're starting to feel down, reach out immediately and connect." Research has also shown that people with more social support are healthier and live longer.

**TRIED AND TRUE** Melissa Gunsch of Pocono Lake, Pennsylvania, struck up a conversation in the checkout line of her grocery store. "I never do this, but I just started chatting about the great weather," says Melissa. "It felt good to put out positive vibes and receive them in return. Definitely a quick boost!"

## Work the Water

"Swimming reduces tension, lifts mood and energizes the body," says

Elizabeth R. Valentine, Ph.D., a psychology professor at the University of London. The reason? Whether it's a pond or the sea, water can soothe.

**TRIED AND TRUE** After feeling exhausted from running errands, Kristy Vahaviolos of Princeton, New Jersey, dipped her feet into a nearby public fountain. "It instantly took me back to my childhood, soothing my quarter-life crisis woes, if only for a few moments," says Kristy.

## Eliminate Clutter

"A messy house, a paper-strewn desk or even a closet packed with old, ill-fitting clothes can keep you feeling overwhelmed," says Florida-based energy expert Jon Gordon.

**TRIED AND TRUE** Whenever she needs a lift, Risa Hoag of Nanuet,

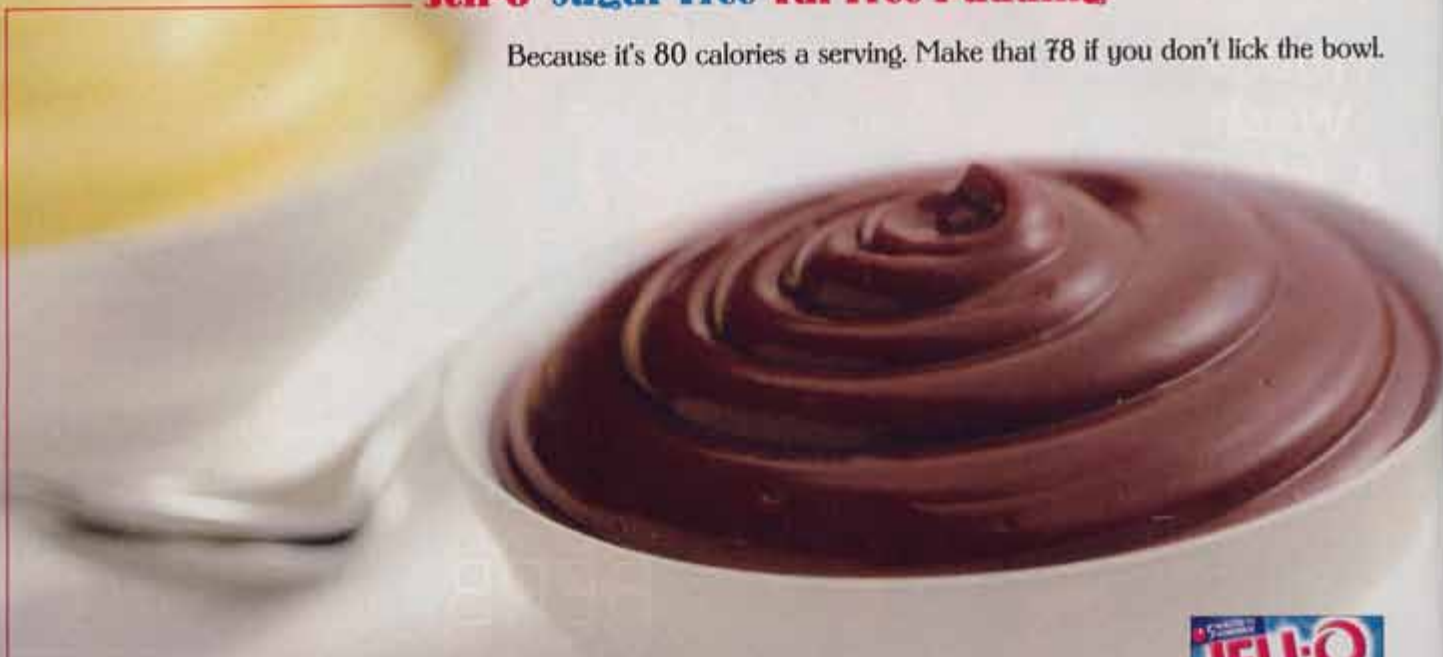
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**tip**

Make your next haircut appointment when paying at the salon so you'll be guaranteed a cut when you need one.

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New York, cleans out her purse. "It's crazy, but it really makes me feel more focused," she says.

### Light Up Your Life

"Not getting enough sun can cause fatigue, low motivation and, during the fall and winter, symptoms of seasonal affective disorder, which include depression, overeating and loss of libido," says Debbie Mandel, author of *Turn On Your Inner Light: Fitness for Body, Mind and Soul*.

**TRIED AND TRUE** Hope Schmid of Fairfax Station, Virginia, tested the power of the sun by sitting outside for an hour every day for a week (with sunscreen on). "I was honestly more relaxed after I felt the sun on my face," she says.

### Reinvent the Ordinary

"Looking beyond the seemingly 'same old' adds excitement to life and boosts energy," says David Silberkleit, author of *A New Adventure Every Day: 541 Simple Ways to Live with Pizzazz*.

### reader tip

Just a spritz of my favorite perfume makes me feel ready to go. When I'm tired I spray a little on: It reminds me of the good times, which gets me revved up.

*Pat Wojciehowski  
Jefferson City, MO*

that nurturing plants, being outside and interacting with the natural world can boost mood and even alleviate physical pain.

**TRIED AND TRUE** "Sitting at a desk

and working on a computer all day can start to take its toll on my nerves," says Meg Tilley of Tampa. Her solution? "I take a walk around my neighborhood. Reconnecting with the outdoors allows me to sort through my thoughts, exercise and take some much-needed me time."

### Up Your Omega-3s and -6s

"Pumpkin and sunflower seeds are rich in omega-6 fatty acids, while herring, mackerel, wild salmon and tuna contain omega-3 fatty acids, which support the activity of serotonin, the neurotransmitter of energy, motivation and elevated mood," says Hyla Cass, M.D., coauthor of *Natural Highs*.

**TRIED AND TRUE** Gralyn Crumpler of Atlanta works in live television and rarely has time to sit down to eat a meal. "I started eating sunflower seeds instead of chips or fruit around three o'clock and it really gave me the extra energy to get through the rest of the day," she says.

### Go Natural

Studies have shown

## Sing, Sing a Song

According to the *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, singing, either alone in the car or at a concert with hundreds of other people, increases energy and positive mood.

**TRIED AND TRUE** To test this, Allison Mooney of Huntington, New York, and her mom, Jane, tried singing their conversation rather than speaking. "We only lasted about 30 seconds. After a few exchanges we broke into a fit of laughter, which definitely recharged me," she says.

## See Red

"The color red stimulates, invigorates and relieves exhaustion," says Dr. Cass. Studies have shown that colorful flowers ease anxiety in women.

**TRIED AND TRUE** "I had a particularly hard week, so I painted my toes red," says Jennifer Jackson of Boston. "When I look at them, I smile. Someone in the elevator even said, 'Great red toes!' That made me feel good."

## Stand Tall

"The simple act of straightening up can increase the amount of oxygen you take into your lungs up to 30 percent," says Gordon. Since your cells require oxygen to make energy, more oxygen means more energy for your brain and body.

**TRIED AND TRUE** Jessica Palmiotti of Alpharetta, Georgia, tested this. Her conclusion: "It helps clear my head," she says. After being slouched in front of the computer for a while, Jessica stands up straight and extends her arms as high as possible, while keeping her feet flat on the floor. She then takes in some slow, deep breaths.

## Go for Green Tea

When she's feeling sluggish, Molly Kimball, a dietitian at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation's Elmwood Fitness Center in New Orleans, makes a mug of green tea. "The caffeine gives a little lift, but not enough to drop your energy levels later," she says.

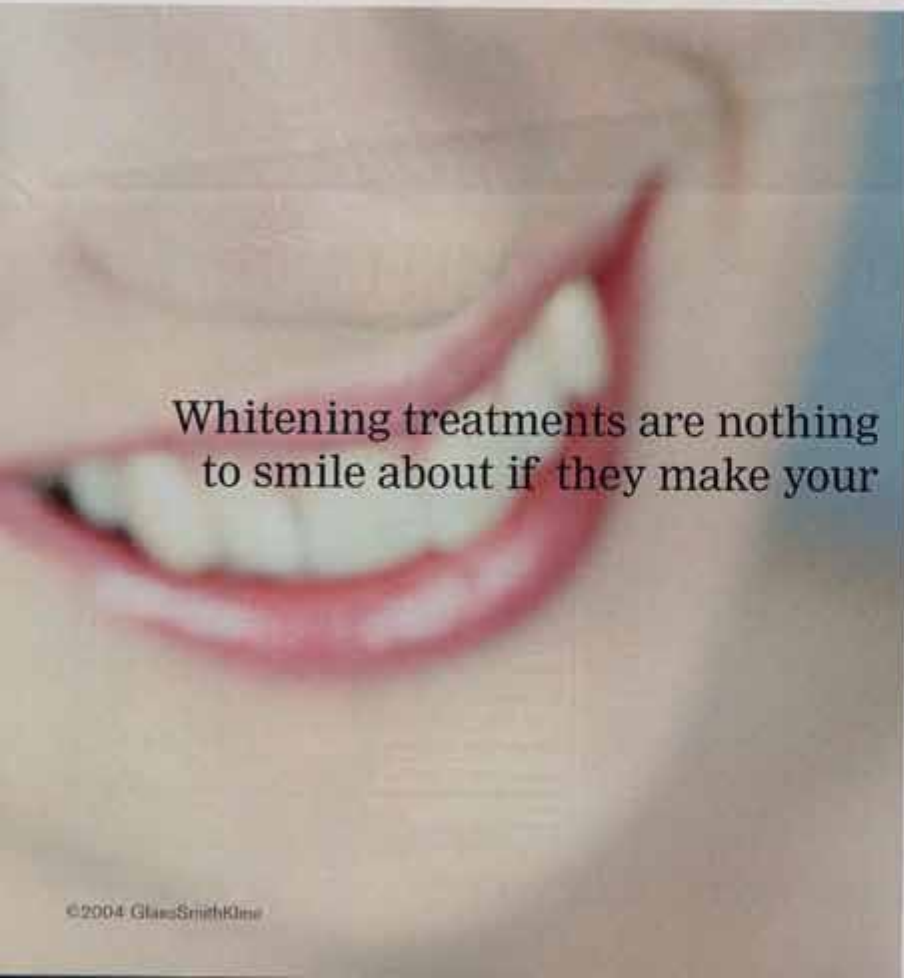
**TRIED AND TRUE** Sensitive to caffeine, Jaime Robinson of San Francisco says that green tea is more refreshing than coffee and lifts her up without making her jittery. No teapot in sight? "I suck on a green tea candy, which works just as well," Jaime says.

## Drink Up

Skimping on water? You'll pay with fatigue. "When you become dehydrated your blood volume literally shrinks, which results in feelings of exhaustion," says Erika Schwartz, M.D., a women's health expert in New York City. Aim for six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day to feel revitalized and to eliminate toxins.

**TRIED AND TRUE** *WD's* Reader Editor Cari Wira carries a bottle of water with her everywhere to make sure she's hydrated. "If I don't drink enough water, I feel foggy, so I fill my bottle with tap water to save money," she says. "I also always serve water with dinner, just like restaurants do." **WD**

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