

# RADIANT LIFE

*Special Edition*

THE AESTHETIC WELLNESS MAGAZINE

VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 1

*Girl Talk*

## MOMMY MAKEOVER

A CAUSE OF  
DEPRESSION  
Everyone Overlooks

## HEALTHY

What Does  
it Mean?



Meet  
DR. MICHAEL  
GOLD  
& DR. BRIAN  
BIESMAN



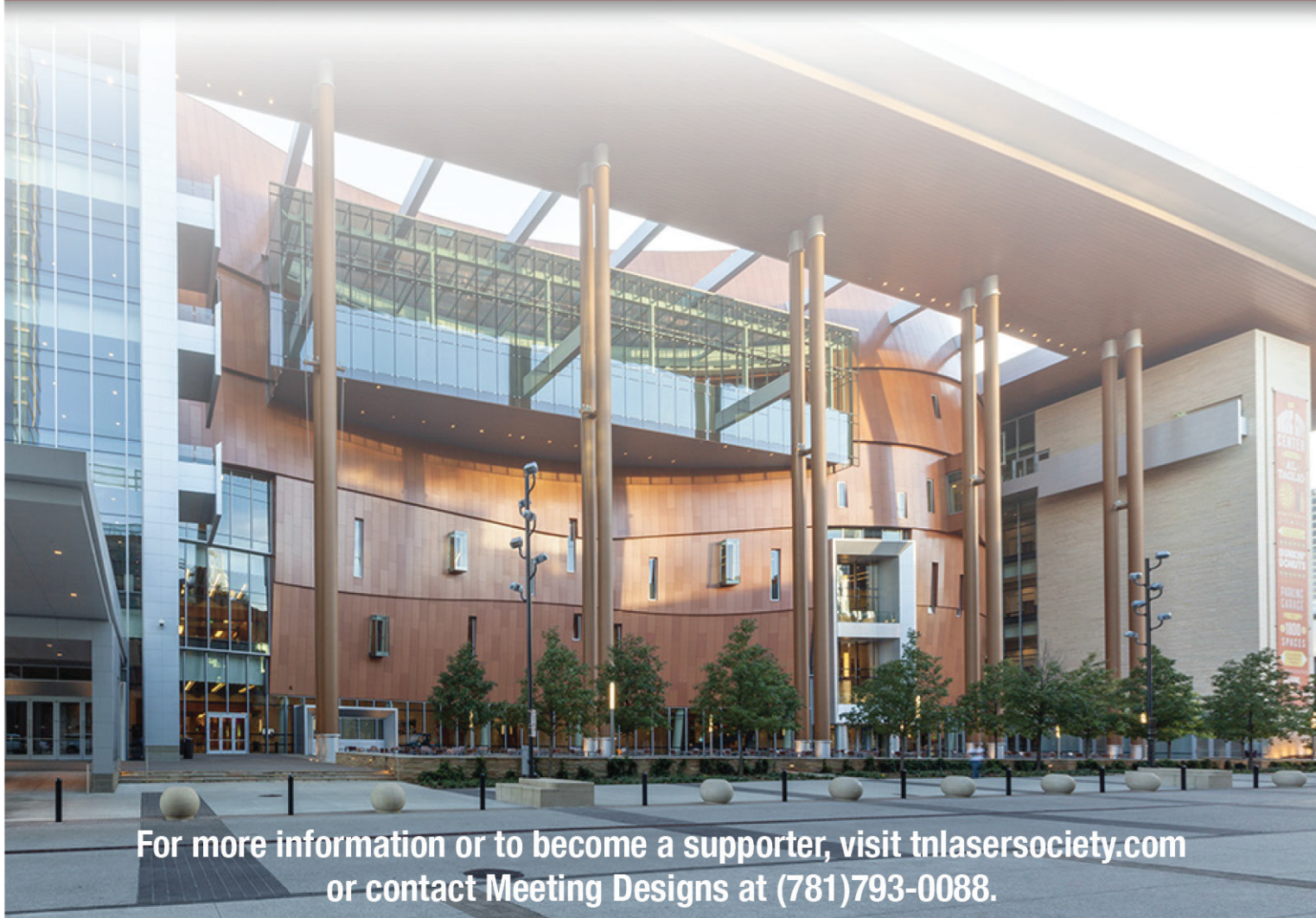


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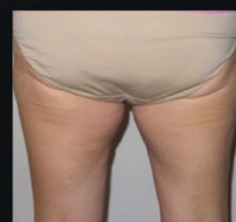
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# RADIANT LIFE®

THE AESTHETIC WELLNESS MAGAZINE

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## A message from our PUBLISHER

Dear Readers,

I am not going to write about how Spring has Sprung and It's Time to Get In Shape 'Cause Summer is Right Around the Corner! I am, however, going to talk to you about my favorite article in this issue: Tips Towards a More Productive You. It's the last article in this issue and there's a reason we saved the best

for last. Whether you're fizzling out on this year's resolution or needs some motivation to don summer outfits, being productive is going to help you overcome whatever barriers you've let rest in your way - especially if that barrier is you.

While we give you a few tips to get you started, you'll find a rhythm that works for you and your schedule. Whatever you do, don't stop. The day you stop, you'll find yourself sliding back into unproductiveness and bad habits. The key is to create a lifelong pattern which becomes your standard, productive, every day routine.

So, let's toast our glasses of green smoothie\* and drink to a more productive you. By getting more done, you open up time you didn't know you had. How will you spend your new found time? I'd love to know. Feel free to drop me a line at dtaylor@RadiantLifeMagazine.com.

*Debbie Taylor*

\*Green smoothie recipe on Page 30.



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# FUN TECH GADGETS FOR 2016. GO PLAY!



This one's for all you pet lovers out there. PetBot is a petcam for people, smartphones and pets. Designed to keep you in touch with your pet while you're away, you can call your pet's name, see your pet through a live video stream and shoot a treat through the dispenser. You can also get a pet selfie sent to your phone. This is a sure fire way to keep you and your pet happy and close! Check it out at [www.petbot.co](http://www.petbot.co).



## IRIS™ Illuminating Eye Massager

You've heard, I'm sure, the saying: Eyes are the window to your soul. Well, sometimes those windows look droopy and don't really reflect the youthfulness you are feeling on the inside. IRIS by FOREO is an eye massager

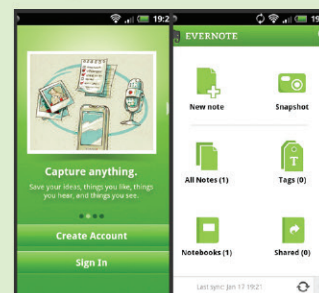
designed to reduce the visible signs of aging and fatigue for eyes that look refreshed and younger. Apply your eye cream and IRIS increases the absorption while reducing puffy eyes, dark circles, crow's feet, fine lines and wrinkles. [www.foreo.com/iris](http://www.foreo.com/iris)



Realizing some women may want to keep their fitness tracking hush-hush, while others don't want to sacrifice fashion for fitness, Mira created the Mira Fitness Bracelet. Mira tracks your activity and sends you reports to help keep you on track. Of course, Mira gets more intuitive the more you wear it. So, if you've put off buying a fitness bracelet because it doesn't match your style, check out [www.mymirafit.com](http://www.mymirafit.com).



Lumo understands that the last thing fitness enthusiasts need is one more gadget to weigh them down, throw off their stride, or make them unbalanced during their regime. So, they created the Lumo Run athletic wear. Available in capris for women and shorts for men, the Lumo Run sensor is embedded in the waistband for a "barely-there, gadget-free experience". Tracking cadence, bounce, ground contact time, braking, pelvic rotation, and stride length, Lumo Run will be available in late spring or early summer. You can pre-order your Lumo Run Sensor & Clip, or the capris or shorts, at [www.lumobodytech.com/lumo-run](http://www.lumobodytech.com/lumo-run)



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# RADIANT LIFE®

THE AESTHETIC WELLNESS MAGAZINE

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The Gold Standard of  
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# Dr. Michael Gold

The Gold Standard of Cosmetic, Surgical  
and Medical Dermatology



Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged, 12th Edition 2014® defines gold standard as: 1. (Economics) a monetary system in which the unit of currency is defined with reference to gold; 2. the supreme example of something against which others are judged or measured. It is this second definition that applies to Dr. Michael H. Gold, a board-certified dermatologist and

dermatologic surgeon. Dr. Gold is the founder and medical director of Gold Skin Care Center, Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa, The Laser & Rejuvenation Center, and Tennessee Clinical Research Center.

He oversees the various facets of the Center's operations: a combination of medical and surgical dermatology, cosmetic dermatology, aesthetic services and research

endeavors. Dr. Gold has earned worldwide recognition for providing patients with leading technological advances in dermatology and aesthetic skin care. He plays an integral role in the development of new pharmaceutical products and medical devices through his clinical research, and presents the results regularly at national and international dermatology and cosmetic meetings.

In addition to these activities, Dr. Gold partners with Dr. Brian Biesman, a world-renowned Nashville authority on cosmetic, reconstructive and laser surgery specializing in oculofacial surgery, to organize and host the annual Symposium for Cosmetic Advances & Laser Education (SCALE) in conjunction with the Tennessee Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery (TSLMS). This is the 11th year that SCALE has been held, and attendance is expected to top 500. The focus of this symposium is to bring together a group of world-renowned experts to educate cosmetic practitioners in the latest technology and techniques. During the three-and-a-half-day event, there will be various workshops and live demonstrations as well as over 70 exhibitors.

At SCALE, Dr. Gold will also be introducing a new procedure known as the Silhouette InstaLift. This non-surgical facelift procedure, which is done under local anesthetic in about 30 minutes, involves the placement of absorbable bi-directional cone



lifting sutures in the mid-cheek and jaw area providing an instant facelift which lasts for 18 to 24 months. Dr. Gold is one of the first eight dermatologists and plastic surgeons in the United States to be trained in this procedure. This exciting new procedure is very safe and very effective. While it is similar to thread facelifts, the Silhouette InstaLift uses sutures so it is free of the problems which plagued past thread-lift protocols.

Dr. Gold explains, "In my practice, I utilize cutting-edge technology and new, state-of-the-art therapies with my ultimate goal of benefitting my patients with faster and better results. I also believe in giving back to this medical specialty. I enjoy teaching young dermatologists and helping advance the use of new technology and therapies across the field. That is why we host SCALE each year. It is a non-profit event focused on education, collaborative solutions and closing gaps between specialties."

Education plays an important part in Dr. Gold's life. He holds numerous academic appointments throughout the world including six visiting faculty appointments in China. He is committed to excellence and works hard to ensure other aesthetic and dermatologic practitioners have the necessary education to do things the right way. He truly sets the benchmark against which other cosmetic and surgical dermatologists are measured.

Besides his role as educator, Dr. Michael Gold is actively involved in cutting-edge research. Under Dr. Gold's supervision, the Tennessee Clinical Research Center (TCRC) conducts multiple FDA-regulated

studies simultaneously. These studies involve new medical devices and drug therapies, helping to bring the latest cutting-edge technology and medical treatments through the approval process and to the patients that will benefit from them. The majority of new lasers, skin care products, and injectables are tested at TCRC. In Dr. Gold's words, "I've worked with nearly every skin care product and injectable manufacturer and laser company in the business."

Gold Skin Care Center is the premiere dermatology clinic in Nashville. It was founded in 1990 by Dr. Gold, and he currently serves as its Medical Director. The Center's providers examine, diagnose and treat dermatologic conditions of the skin, hair and nails for patients of all ages, pediatric to adult. Common conditions treated include: acne, eczema, fungal infections, hair loss, lichen planus, moles, psoriasis, rashes, rosacea, scabies, skin cancers, warts and more.

The Laser & Rejuvenation Center offers cosmetic patients an expert staff, a private setting, and the very best in aesthetic and cosmetic treatments. Procedures and services available include: acne light treatments, Botox/Dysport/Xeomin toxin injections, cellulite reduction, dermal fillers, fat reduction, fractional resurfacing, hyper-/hypopigmentation treatments, laser hair removal, microneedling, MiraDry underarm sweat reduction, photo-rejuvenation, skin tightening, tattoo removal, and vascular treatments. The Laser & Rejuvenation Center staff utilizes the largest and most advanced collection of lasers in the Southeastern United States. They expertly treat the signs of aging in the skin, namely: fine lines, wrinkles,

skin sagging or laxity, uneven pigmentation, and broken blood vessels. They also remove unwanted hair and tattoos.

For rejuvenation and relaxation, Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa is the place. There you can engage in a single service or a full pampering spa package. The certified staff aestheticians will educate you on proper care of your skin. They will tailor a skin care regimens designed to meet your individual needs. The Medical Spa offers a variety of medical-grade skin care products including ilissa by Gold, MD, Dr. Gold's own line of premium skin care products. Procedures and services available at Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa include: acne light treatments, cellulite reduction, facials, fat reduction, fractional resurfacing, skin care products, laser hair removal, microneedling, microdermabrasion, permanent makeup, and skin tightening.

Dr. Michael Gold set the bar high. He is world-renowned in the field of cosmetic and surgical dermatology. He runs a multi-faceted, highly successful premier Skin Care Center. He gives back to the specialty through teaching and co-hosting SCALE. He is indeed the Gold Standard within the industry. His business model is worth study and emulation.

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Contact Dr. Michael H. Gold at Gold Skin Care Center, 2000 Richard Jones Road, Suite 220, Nashville, Tennessee 37215. Telephone: 615-383-2400. You may also contact him through the website at: [www.goldskincare.com](http://www.goldskincare.com)

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# Dr. Brian Biesman

A Humble Man, A Giant in His Field



Dr. Brian Biesman comes across as a humble, quiet man but his expertise in Cosmetic and Reconstructive Eyelid Surgery is apparent. Dr. Biesman is the Founder and Director of the Nashville Centre for Laser and Facial Surgery. He specializes in cosmetic and reconstructive eyelid and facial surgery. He also serves as a Clinical Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN where he holds appointments in the divisions

of Ophthalmology, Dermatology, and Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. In addition, he is a Clinical Associate Professor at The University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center in Memphis, TN.

As a young man growing up in Flint, MI, Brian Biesman was interested in science, finding the latest technological gadgets fascinating. He also had a passion for helping people. As he grew older, it seemed natural to combine his

love of science with his desire to assist others. He decided to study medicine at the University of Michigan, graduating with top honors. He went on to complete an Ophthalmology residency at the Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary in Chicago and fellowship training in Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital in New York City. Upon completion, he returned to Chicago as Chief Resident.

From Chicago, it was off to Boston's New England Medical Center where he served as Director of the Eye Plastics and Orbit Services and the Center for Aesthetic Eyelid and Facial Surgery departments. He also served as an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Tufts University School of Medicine. His teaching career continued as he earned faculty appointments in the Division of Otolaryngology at the New England Medical Center and the Divisions of Dermatology and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the Beth Israel-Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Dr. Biesman is a member of the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery (ASLMS) where he is the Laser Safety Officer and past President. Dr. Biesman has received several national awards from his peers. These include the 2012 Henry Baylis Lectureship Award, presented by the American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive for contributions to the field of aesthetic oculo-facial surgery, 2012 Ellet Drake Memorial Award, an award presented annually by the ASLMS to a physician who has demonstrated longitudinal excellence



over the course of their career in the use of lasers for patient care, in laser research, and in teaching other physicians best practices in laser medicine, and the 2010 Leon Goldman Award, an award presented annually by the ASLMS to a physician who has demonstrated longitudinal excellence over the course of their career in the use of lasers for patient care, in laser research, and in teaching other physicians best practices in laser medicine. Dr. Biesman is also a member of the American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, the Tennessee Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, and the American Medical Association. He is an Honorary Member of the American Society of Dermatologic Surgery. He sits on numerous corporate advisory boards and holds positions on the editorial boards of Lasers in Surgery and Medicine, Cosmetic Dermatology, and other industry publications. Dr. Biesman also maintains leadership roles in many local civic organizations.

This humble giant isn't content to sit back on his laurels. Dr. Biesman dedicates himself to research in a variety of areas. His current research includes: technology-based cutaneous rejuvenation, novel approaches to non-invasive tissue tightening, transcutaneous and minimally invasive lipolysis, soft tissue volume augmentation for facial rejuvenation, transcutaneous delivery of botulinum toxin, technology-based modification of facial muscles, laser-enhanced drug delivery, home-use lasers and light devices, advances in ablative fractional skin resurfacing, cutaneous repigmentation, and low-level light therapy for photorejuvenation.

He is often involved in clinical trials, the development of new devices, and identifying new treatment applications for existing medical devices. He

frequently assists with the clinical and research work necessary to secure FDA approval for new treatment modalities. In addition, Dr. Biesman continues to see patients at the Nashville Centre for Laser and Facial Surgery, performing surgical as well as non-invasive/ minimally invasive treatments. His practice continues to grow. Recently this growth necessitated the expansion of his office space.

Today, Dr. Biesman's practice is primarily cosmetic. While he continues to offer both surgical and non-surgical options to his patients, he anticipates the non-surgical side of the practice will see the most future growth. As a whole, the trend in the cosmetic medical field is toward non-surgical options. As technological advances allow more cosmetic enhancements to be done without surgery, the trend toward the non-surgical side of the business will accelerate. There will always be a place for surgical procedures in the cosmetic medical practice, but they will become a smaller piece of the pie.

For providers wishing to grow their practices, Dr. Biesman recommends they stay abreast of the latest technological advances in the field and look for ways to provide their patients with the best outcomes by using a combination of surgical and non-surgical modalities. Another growth area is marketing cosmetic services to male patients. In general, men aren't as well versed as women are in the rejuvenation options available. Therefore, education is critical. Dr. Biesman suggests the following rejuvenation options for men: "First, neuromodulators such as Botox®, Dysport® or Xeomin® for frown line and wrinkle reduction. Second, reduction of the fullness under the chin area or double chin using Kybella or Cool Mini CoolSculpting treatments. Maintaining a natural-looking but refreshed look is critical for men to stay competitive in

today's marketplace. We can help them by refreshing their look and building their confidence."

Cosmetic medical practitioners serve a need. Dr. Biesman explains, "My goal is to help patients always look their best. I once treated a young woman with very low self-esteem. She had very bad acne scarring on her face. When she first came to me, she had her hair dyed a bright pink and she was wearing a very low cut top. She was terribly self-conscious about her facial scars. She was projecting the message—Look at anything but my face! After treating her acne scars, her face looked so much better. She returned to see me a short time later. She was dressed in a fashionable business suit and her hair was naturally blond. She was a totally different person, much happier, more self-confident and obviously more successful. This is what cosmetic medicine is all about. The physical changes we make in our patients may be subtle, but the positive psychological changes resulting from them are huge."

Dr. Biesman goes on to say, "As cosmetic medical professionals, it is important that we say 'no' to patients when they are asking for treatments or procedures that are not right for them. It is important that we help our patients to look like the best version of themselves possible, not an unnatural version. We must protect people from themselves. Our goal should be to make that person look the best they can look – by looking natural, age-appropriate, and refreshed."

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**Dr. Brian Biesman may be contacted at the Nashville Centre for Laser and Facial Surgery located at 345 23rd Avenue North, Suite 416, Nashville, TN 37203. Telephone: 615-329-1110. You may also contact him through their website at: [www.drbiesman.com](http://www.drbiesman.com).**

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# The Art of Consultation

By Cheryl Whitman, Founder and CEO of  
Beautiful Forever Medical Spa Business Consultants

The in-office consultation is a vital part of every client's experience. In addition, it is an important avenue for increased success and every member of your staff should be trained to follow the same procedure for every consultation. Most importantly, however, the consultation will help you to determine what each client needs and wants so you and your staff can design an appropriate treatment plan for the highest level of client satisfaction.

The first impression

Once the client has been scheduled for a consultation, the real work begins. This is your practice's opportunity to really shine. Not only will you be able to offer your services and products, but also show that yours is a nurturing and professional environment in which the client can place the utmost trust. You should create a comfortable and non-threatening consult room where you can build rapport in a relaxed manner. Also, be sure to greet each client in a timely fashion and be respectful of his or her time.

Keep in mind the following attributes you would like your staff to embody:

- Honest
- Knowledgeable
- Friendly
- Experts in technique and service
- Low pressure
- Informative
- Empathetic
- Trustworthy

Before you settle into a consultation, it is important to get into the right mindset. That does not mean getting ready to sell, sell, sell. It does mean taking a few moments to remember some important points about the consultation process, including:

- This is a conversation to explore if and/or how your practice can be of assistance to this patient.
- Your practice is most concerned about what services and products will best serve this patient.
- You are willing to put yourself in this patient's skin so you can see things from his or her perspective.

- The consultation room is a place where you really listen.
- This is all about the patient, not about your sales goals.
- Consultation is a process you enjoy and feel good about.

If this is how your staff approaches each consultation, your practice will come across as authentic, caring and committed. Exactly the type of place your potential patients will want to go for treatments, services and products.

## Effective Q & A

A successful consultation is not just about asking questions, it is about knowing what to ask and when. According to Russel Webster in *Super Communication: The NLP Way*, "Address your first question to yourself: if you could press a magic button and get every piece of information you want, what would you want to know? The answer will immediately help you compose the right questions." Approaching every consultation this way will be to unlocking the client's needs, desires and objections.

Practicing a technique called engaged inquiry is a great way of gaining rapport with your clients/patients. It requires that you set aside judgments, assumptions and reactions as they arise during the consultation and ask questions so that you are able to gain the information necessary to fully understand what the client is telling you. The goal is to help you determine the actual needs of each individual in an interactive way.

Engaged inquiry is designed to help you find the right service or product fit for each individual client. Once you uncover his or her wants, needs and values, you will be better prepared to present the best options available. In addition to gathering information, engaged inquiry also helps:

- Build trust and rapport
- Keep the client focused
- Ensure that the client feels like part of the solution
- Allow the consultant to personalize the services and products that will best meet the unique needs, wants and values of the client

Be sure to ask open-ended questions rather than the "yes or no" variety. Ask for clarification, "Could you be more specific about that?" The basic rule of the engaged inquiry is: Never assume a thing that you can learn by asking.

## Listen to the client

A vitally important aspect of engaged inquiry is learning to be a good listener. The problem is that most of us are not very good at it. Although people can hear 450 – 600 words per minute, we only speak about 125 words per minute. That means we have all kinds of time to start formulating a response and we may actually stop listening. Instead of thinking about what you will be saying next, use the time you are silent to really listen. (Strangely enough, the words "silent" and "listen" share the same letters. Keep them firmly in mind during each consultation). You can become a better listener and stay more focused on what your client is saying with the following tips:

1. Never interrupt when your client is speaking.
2. Be present. Maintain eye contact and focus on what your client is saying (or trying to say) instead of being concerned with closing the sale. Show that you have a genuine interest in helping them.
3. Help the client feel heard. Clarify what the client has said during the conversation. Ask questions to show your interest in finding a solution for the client's specific needs. Rephrase comments or questions in your own words in order to ensure that you not only heard, but also understood. For example, you may show your understanding with comments including: What I hear you saying is.... To further clarify .... Tell me more about ...
4. Be a solution-oriented listener. Spend more time listening for a solution than you would on the problem.
5. Listen between the lines. What is implied is often more important than what is articulated. If the client is sending conflicting messages, ask a



question to explore the meaning behind the words.

6. Resist the temptation to rebut. If you focus on creating a rebuttal, you are not listening. Remember that you can always rebut later, after you have heard the whole message and had time to think about it.
7. Listen for information. When you listen for information, you are looking under the words to explore the implied meaning behind them. There are four main things we listen for when speaking with a client:
  - Listen for what is missing.
  - Listen for concerns the client may have or what is important to them.
  - Listen for what they value.
  - Listen for what they want and need in order to fill in the gap between what they have now and what they want.

*(Adapted from Keith Rosen, Executive Sales Coach, Profit Builders)*

When you encounter an objection, you may choose to employ the Feel-Felt-Found technique. It gives you a chance to recognize the objection, sympathize with it and then share a simple solution. For example, if a client has answered questions in a way that shows she wants the benefits of a particular service, but is concerned about the cost, you could respond with, "I understand how you feel. In fact, many of our clients felt the same way at first, but they found the results from this procedure were long lasting and actually more cost effective than other options."

Engaged inquiry is equal parts asking and listening, both of which are learned. For some, these skills may come more naturally because of certain personality traits. For others, it requires additional practice for mastery. Take the time to do some simple role-playing in your practice so that your staff can better develop these skills.

#### Know your products and services

To effectively present features and benefits, you must know your product. If you don't, how will you show the guest how the service or product will benefit them? When you know your services and products inside and out, not only can you explain how they work, but also handle any questions or objections a client may have.

Be aware of the trap of offering too much information. When a client is on the verge of making a decision to follow your suggestion to set the date for a procedure or purchase a product, it is time to stop talking. If you plunge ahead with more

reasons for a client to say yes, especially when that client is ready to say yes, you run the risk of either confusing the client, or causing him or her to lose interest and tune you out.

The practice of engaged listening is designed to prevent over informing and overwhelming a client. If you have listened effectively, you can tailor your consultation to match the expressed – and hidden – needs and concerns of each client. Start by offering only the benefits and features that you feel will best serve the client. Then, let the client lead the discussion with questions or requests for more details. Once a client has the information he or she needs to make a decision, it is time to close by securing the appointment or the sale.

#### Recognize the buying signals

Do be aware of any telltale signs that a client is ready to make a final decision – even if you feel you have more to say on the subject. There are some generally accepted buying signals that you can look for, including when a client:

- Spends time looking at one service or product over others that have been offered
  - Asks questions about the details
  - Asks about price and/or financing
  - Uses possession language
  - Asks about other clients' experiences or opinions
  - Takes out a date book or wallet
- Obviously, there are also signals that tell you that a client is not ready to move forward. These include:
- Avoiding eye contact with you
  - Making 'not now' excuses
  - Casually handling the product or collateral material
  - Looking at many different services or products

If you have a client who is not ready to make a final decision at the end of your consultation, you will want to carefully (and quickly) review what may have gone wrong, then take steps to correct it. Most likely, you have not listened closely enough to what the client hopes to achieve, so you have not offered the right service or product. If this is the case, you may still have time to meet the client's needs by reviewing what you have already talked about by saying something like, "I see that this is not the right option for you. Tell me again what it is that you are hoping to achieve so we can find the right fit." Then listen.

Keep in mind that people do have different buying styles and you are sure

to see them all. Some will make a choice based solely on logic. Others buy for the emotional need that will be fulfilled. And still others base their decision on how their choice will look to others. Listen and watch for the cues so you can further individualize your consultation.

#### Complete the consult

At the end of every consultation is the moment when you ask for the sale. Obviously, some clients will tell you they want to set the appointment or purchase the product before you can formulate the question. Everyone else will need to be asked. What is most important at this juncture is that you know how to ask for the sale. First, assume the sale. If you have done everything right, it will be a matter of asking when, which procedure, how many treatments or which products.

Remember to maintain eye contact, and be polite, sincere and respectful. For example, you may say, "So, Sue, from what we have discussed, you are most interested in the dermal filler. When would you like to schedule time for these procedures? Is next Tuesday or Wednesday better for you?" You may follow with suggestions about the products that the client should use before and after the treatment. If an appointment must be set in another part of the office, you should either call in the staff member who handles the appointments or walk the client to him or her.

Finally, don't forget why the client has come to your practice in the first place. If you can provide the finest services and products along with a generous and caring manner, you will continue to build a successful practice one consultation after another.

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**Cheryl Whitman is an internationally recognized pioneer in medical spa business consulting. A published author and popular speaker, Cheryl has been a beauty-industry consultant for over 30 years. As founder and CEO of Beautiful Forever, Cheryl spearheads a successful team of medical spa consultants and business professionals. Cheryl also developed the Medical Spa Success System, a revolutionary program providing a turnkey educational success system and consulting services package helping clients brilliantly jumpstart successful medical spa businesses. For more information, call 1-877-SPA-MEDI or go to [www.medicalspaconsultant.com](http://www.medicalspaconsultant.com) or [www.beautifulforever.com](http://www.beautifulforever.com).**

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*Girl Talk*

# The Mommy Makeover



Wouldn't it be great to have your body back right after giving childbirth? While there is no such thing, many women have found great benefits from Mommy Makeover procedures to rejuvenate your body and life following childbirth.

It would be no surprise if you've watched to see the tell-tale signs of a newborn mother. It's easy to identify new mothers by their bodies. It's easy to identify those who have saggy smaller breasts, a stomach pouch, and the loss of the pregnancy glow on their faces. Too, you don't have to be a keen observer to make an impression in your mind of the women you see based on the appearance of their faces and bodies. One look

in the mirror can tell you about your imperfections.

On the up side, cosmetic techniques do exist so people can reclaim what was lost due to pregnancy or even being a mom for years. When Mommies can give themselves a single day to be attentive for rejuvenation of their face and body, it's a time of celebration to diminish visible signs of imperfections resulting from childbirth. So, a closer glance through *Girl Talk* at the opportunities to enhance life during motherhood may give you some great ideas to leverage a boost for your confidence and to enhance your self-image. So, let's get right down to it!

"It's wonderful that there are

plastic surgery procedures that provide immediate results, involve little to no downtime and are reasonably priced for mothers to easily fit into their lifestyle and checkbook."

The four girls with me on the phone agree. All of them wish to give the scoop on the procedures they went for that made a difference for them. Leonora Anderson of Richfield, Minnesota was the first to step in and her response was better than I had expected.

"I couldn't be happier after my Mommy Makeover. Wish I hadn't wait so long!" said Leonora.



***"So, why did you have the Mommy Makeover?"***

Leonora replies, "I had been working out consistently but did not see a change in my stomach pouch. I learned that loose muscles form the pouch and cannot be corrected by exercise and diet. I tried dieting too. Nothing worked but the Tummy Tuck. I had the Avelar Tummy Tuck which includes liposuction since I had some stubborn fat deposits too. Now, I find I get more out of my exercise and diet. Plus I got my pre-pregnancy stomach back! It's been an amazing change! I also had ThermiVa® for vaginal rejuvenation. I loved the fact that it is a no downtime, no pain procedure that didn't require surgery. The results were remarkable. I am tighter in that area, making intimacy far greater. My husband likes the results too. I had my labia trimmed too since it was stretched out after childbirth. I look and feel beautiful!"

Leonora is not alone. Millions of women have had more than one procedure following the birth of their children. When more than one procedure is performed simultaneously, it is called a Mommy Makeover. And why not? The procedures combine facility and anesthesia fees, so costs are contained. Too, downtime is minimal compared to the many years of benefits. One recovery time is very appealing, right?



***"What would you want to tell people if they were interested in the Mommy Makeover?"***

"I would want them to know that the procedures are safe and effective. I didn't know it would be this easy to obtain a great result. I say go for it!" Leonora replies.

Lynne Marrs of Hightstown, New Jersey jumps in with her recommendations for consumers interested in Mommy Makeover procedures. "I highly recommend all procedures that can be done to provide a boost in self-esteem and have you look better."

***"What types of procedures did you have performed and why?"***

Lynne replies, "I had a Breast Lift and Augmentation plus a traditional Tummy Tuck and a Chemical Peel. The best part for me is that recovery was not as time consuming as I thought it would be. Once my husband saw the results, he happily stepped in to help out with the children. I had saggy small breasts following childbirth. I had dull rough skin. In addition, I didn't have my six pack abs after childbirth. I needed help, but wanted to wait until



I had all of my children to have the Mommy Makeover. This way, my results would be long lasting. So, I got a series of Chemical Peels first to reveal more radiant skin like my pregnancy glow. I'm so happy with the results of my breast lift and augmentation. I feel so

much better in my clothes and I look great! The Tummy Tuck was just what I needed to keep me motivated to exercise and diet. Breast surgery and the Tummy Tuck have taken years off the appearance of my body! My husband says

I have such a kissable face and body! The results I've had are wonderful!







Pregnancy can be cruel, you know?"

Lynne's right, but it's not only pregnancy. It's no time to exercise or diet. It's busy stressful lifestyles. All of which postpone or prevent us from reaching youthful goals.

Sandie McKenzie of the Seattle, Washington area decides to join in, "It's been amazing that my procedures made such a big difference. I did the Avelar Tummy Tuck and Breast Augmentation. My breasts were so small I didn't have to worry about sagging! Now, I look like I'm in my 20's when I'm really 39!"

.....  
***"How about you, Tracey? What procedures did you have to achieve the Mommy Makeover and why?"***

Tracey Jones of the Akron, Ohio area, replies with a tone of relief in her voice, "I did Breast Augmentation and the Tummy Tuck, but I also did alternating sessions of microdermabrasion and chemical

peels for more youthful skin. I had tried everything to brighten my skin. Makeup couldn't cover it up. I wanted a less aggressive approach. So, I alternated between both microdermabrasion and chemical peels over the course of 4 to 5 months. I'm very happy with the results of my complete Mommy Makeover, I was very bothered before. I was self-conscious in my interactions with people. I did not feel confident re-entering the job market either. Now, I feel fantastic! The results of the procedures have really made a difference for me."

Yes, the advantages of Mommy Makeover procedures can be wonderful. The simplicity, reasonable cost and little downtime make such procedures very appealing. Now that you hear from the testimonials themselves, perhaps, it's time to step up to invest in yourself. Make that call to a plastic surgeon and aesthetic professional! **RLM**





# Top Mommy Makeover Procedures

As I interviewed these patients I thought, wow it's great to get the personal prospective. My goal was to hit all the high points, knowing that when you are researching information about procedures, you want to get into what makes them tick. I also did some research to identify the top Mommy Makeover procedures, including:

## Laser Skin Resurfacing

Designed to penetrate the top skin layer, while stimulating collagen production in the dermis layer, laser skin resurfacing is one of the most advanced approaches for sun damaged skin, sagging skin prevention, and facial rejuvenation. For tighter, more resilient skin, investigate the SmoothBeam laser, the Erbium laser and the CO2 laser.



## Microdermabrasion

This non-invasive treatment is great for any adult age and skin type. For increased collagen over time, diminished fine lines, improved skin tone and less visibility of age spots, it's worthwhile to allow microdermabrasion crystals to buff your skin. Regular treatments optimize the benefits in time.

## Photofacials

Photofacials focus on repairing damaged skin cells, while increasing collagen production through the use of a laser. In this technique, a pulsed light and infrared light are used to penetrate the skin surface and stimulate collagen production. For minor lines, wrinkles and a bit of youthfulness, consider photofacials whereby you can often achieve noticeable results in one treatment.

## Liposuction

Liposuction is very popular for mothers that wish to improve body bulges difficult to lose after childbirth. Designed to remove small pockets of fat, liposuction offers quick relief from stubborn fat areas in the stomach, back, hips, and thighs-common areas for mothers.

## Mini Tummy Tuck, Traditional Tummy Tuck and Avelar Tummy Tuck

Mothers commonly request the mini tummy tuck and traditional tummy tuck procedures, as well as, the newer Avelar Tummy Tuck. Since abdominal muscles become lax following pregnancy, the tummy tuck offers a means to tighten lax muscles and treats a protruding abdomen. The tummy tuck corrects separated muscles that often occur during pregnancy which cannot be improved otherwise. The procedure also allows for excess skin to be trimmed-a common concern among moms. Recovery from the mini tummy tuck may take a week and up to six weeks for the traditional tummy tuck, depending upon the extent of the procedure and the individual's healing process.

## Breast Augmentation and Breast Lift

Breast augmentation and breast lift are two other procedures that are very common for moms. Often performed following breast feeding, breast augmentation and/or the breast lift often allow mothers to booster their self-image and self-esteem. Breasts may appear smaller and saggy following

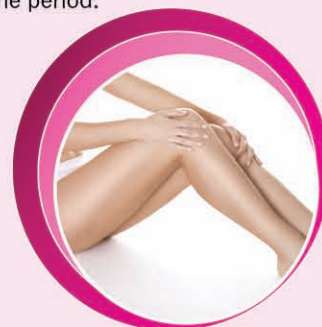
pregnancy. This is because breast milk glands swell and replace fatty tissue during pregnancy. After childbirth, milk glands shrink and create the appearance of sagginess, smallness, and excess skin that is resistant to exercise. The breast lift is designed to remove excess skin, reposition existing breast tissue and improve breast sagginess. The breast augmentation procedure increases breast size with the use of breast implants. Both procedures do not usually require more than a week's recovery time. The procedures may be performed in one treatment session, but select plastic surgeons prefer to stage the procedures in two sessions for an optimal outcome.

## Vaginal Rejuvenation

Vaginal Rejuvenation is one of the latest requests among women. During vaginal delivery, the labia may be stretched, tear or otherwise appear damaged. This may make wearing underwear and bathing suits uncomfortable. This may also affect intimacy for mothers. The vaginal rejuvenation procedure is appealing for these reasons. Recovery is non-existent with ThermiVa.

## Laser Therapy for Spider Veins

You may wish to consider laser therapy for visible spider veins that may surface during pregnancy. The laser works by heating the inside of the vein to seal the vein and diminish its appearance above the skin. This procedure is not associated with discomfort or a recovery time period.





# Unlock the WEIGHT LOSS FLOOD GATES

Fat. It's just there, always on your mind, always tampering with an outfit that you want to wear. You check how you look in the mirror, and you don't like what you see. Magazines and online searches tell you to take one supplement after another to get rid of it, you fail again, disappointing. You try dieting. This diet and that diet, nothing seems to work for you, even exercise. Let's face it, fat sucks. And it's unhealthy to have too much of it. So what do you do? How do you address the issues?

Let's start this discussion by saying let's look at 11 ways to lose weight effectively. There are other methods, but only a few proven strategies that have been shown to target the fat.





## 1. Don't Eat Sugar

Added sugar is extremely unhealthy. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that sugar has uniquely harmful effects on metabolic health. Numerous studies have shown that excess sugar, mostly due to the large amounts of fructose, can lead to increased accumulation of fat in the belly. Some believe that this is the primary mechanism behind sugar's harmful effects on health... it increases belly fat and liver fat, which leads to insulin resistance and then to a host of metabolic problems. Liquid sugar is even worse in this regard. Liquid calories don't get "registered" by the brain in the same way as solid calories. So, when you drink sugar-sweetened beverages, you end up eating more total calories. Studies also show that sugar-sweetened beverages are linked to a 60% increased risk of obesity in children... per serving. This includes sugar-sweetened beverages, soda, fruit juices, various sports drinks, as well as coffee and tea with sugar added to them. Keep in mind that none of this applies to whole fruit which (as a part of a balanced diet) is extremely healthy and has plenty of fiber that mitigates the negative effects of fructose.

**Bottom Line:** Excess sugar consumption may be the primary driver of belly fat accumulation, especially sugary beverages like soft drinks and fruit juices.

## 2. Eating More Protein

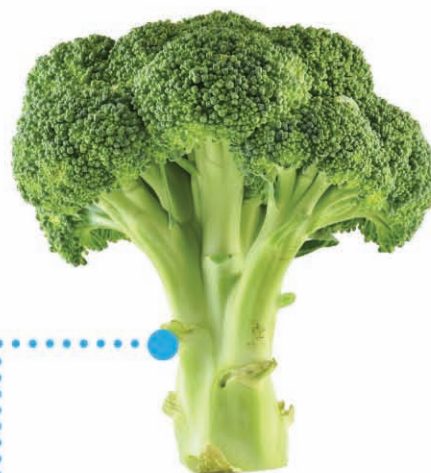
Believe it or not, protein is the most important macronutrient when it comes to losing weight. Protein has no added sugar! It has been shown to reduce cravings by as much as 60%, boost

metabolism by 80-100 calories per day and help you eat up to 441 fewer calories per day. If weight loss is your goal, then adding more protein to your diet and cutting down carbs is perhaps the single most effective change you can do. Not only will it help you lose fat... it can also help you avoid re-gaining weight if you ever decide to abandon your weight loss efforts. There is also some evidence that protein is particularly effective against belly fat. If you struggle with getting enough protein in your diet, then a quality protein supplement (with whey protein) is a healthy and convenient way to boost your total intake. But watch for the added sugar.

**Bottom Line:** Eating enough protein is a very effective way to lose weight. Some studies suggest that protein is particularly effective against belly fat accumulation.

## 3. Cut Carbs from Your Diet

Alright, you knew this was coming. Carb restriction is a very effective way to lose fat and keep it off, but also a great way to get fat if you eat them. This is supported by numerous studies... when people cut carbs, their appetite goes down and they lose weight. Over 20 randomized controlled trials have now shown that low-carb diets lead to 2-3 times more weight loss than low-fat diets. This is true even when the low-carb groups are allowed to eat as much as they want, while the low-fat groups are calorie restricted and hungry! Just avoiding the refined carbs (white



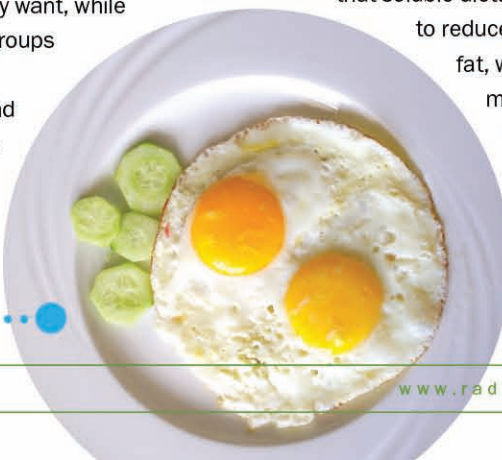
bread, pastas, flour products, etc.) should be sufficient, especially if you keep your protein high.

**Bottom Line:** Studies have shown that low-carb diets are particularly effective at getting rid of the fat in the belly area, around the organs and in the liver.

## 4. Eat Foods Rich in Fiber

What many do not realize is that dietary fiber is mostly indigestible plant matter which has a huge bearing on our gut health. It is often claimed that eating plenty of fiber can help with weight loss, true. But it's important to keep in mind that not all fiber is created equal. It seems to be mostly the viscous fibers that have an effect on our fat weight. These are fibers that bind water and form a thick gel that "sits" in the gut and gently moves everything out of the gut as we digest. This gel also dramatically slows the movement of food through your stomach and small bowel, and slow down the digestion allowing for greater absorption of nutrients. The end result is a prolonged feeling of fullness and reduced appetite.

**Bottom Line:** There's evidence that soluble dietary fiber may lead to reduced amounts of belly fat, which should cause major improvements in metabolic health.





## 5. Change your Gut Health

**Fact:** Our gut is home to approximately 100 trillion microorganisms. It's the largest organ in the human body. The human gut contains 10 times more bacteria than all the human cells in the entire body, with over 400 known diverse bacterial species in it, of which more are being discovered each year. Research has continually shown that the gut flora, and the health of the gut in general, plays a significant role in both obesity and diabetes. The composition of the organisms living in your gut determines – to some extent, at least – how your body absorbs the nutrients you eat, how easy (or hard) it is for you to lose weight, and how well your metabolism functions. Different species of bacteria seem to have different effects on appetite, weight gain, weight loss, and the metabolism. Probiotics have been found to benefit metabolic syndrome, which often goes hand-in-hand with obesity. This makes sense since both are caused by a diet high in sugars, which leads to insulin resistance, fuels the growth of unhealthy bacteria, and packs on excess weight.

There are other steps you can take to restore your gut flora. These include:

- Remove all food toxins from your diet. This includes fluoride in drinking water, grain fed meat, including those that have received hormones or antibiotics. Fructose, sugar, processed carbohydrates and fast foods.
- Eat plenty of fermentable fibers (starches like sweet potato, yam, yucca, etc.), vegetables, and fermented

foods (pickles, Korean kimchi, natto, sauerkraut, etc.).

- Take a high-quality probiotic.
- Take digestive enzymes
- Treat any intestinal pathogens (such as parasites) that may be present by getting a stool test and blood tests.

**Bottom Line:** To lose weight, first restore your gut flora to a healthy balance with less toxic foods in your diet, and pre and pro biotic supplements.

## 6. Exercise is Very Effective at Reducing Fat

Exercise is important for various reasons. It is among the best things you can do if you want to live a long, healthy life and avoid disease. Cardiovascular exercise (like walking, running, swimming, etc.) has been shown to cause major reductions in fat in numerous studies, but it is not the best method. From a cardio stand point we need to strengthen the heart and cardiovascular system, but let's face it, cardio alone fails to build muscle. Muscle burns fat! Again, keep in mind that we need to move. We need to get at least 10,000 steps a day, so sitting behind a desk all day is not going to help, even if you do exercise.

Cardio exercise has its benefits. In one study, exercise completely prevented people from re-gaining abdominal fat after weight loss, implying that exercise is particularly important during weight maintenance. Exercise also leads to reduced inflammation, blood sugar levels and all

the other metabolic abnormalities that are associated with central obesity. Most important, cardio exercise promotes the use of fat as a fuel (if you eat lower levels of sugar) and increases lipoprotein lipase, which helps break up bad fats and use them more for fuel than storage.

**Bottom Line:** Cardiovascular exercise can be very effective if you are trying to lose fat, but should be mixed with strength training. Exercise also has a number of other health benefits.

## 7. Train High Intensity Not Low Intensity

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) produces a phenomenon called EPOC (excess post-exercise oxygen consumption). In a nutshell, this means that your metabolism is going to stay elevated after you exercise, so you continue burning calories even after you are done training. Sometimes metabolism stays elevated up to 72 hours after an intense weight training session. EPOC is the gift that keeps on giving (in terms of body fat reduction). HIIT training includes strength training and is well known for its fat burning capabilities. Compelling and ever-mounting research shows that the ideal form of exercise is short bursts of high intensity exercise. Not only does it beat conventional cardio as the most effective and efficient form of exercise, it also provides health benefits you simply cannot get from regular aerobics, such as a tremendous boost in human growth hormone (HGH), aka the "fitness hormone".

One study published in the Journal of Obesity reported that





12 weeks of HIIT not only resulted in significant reductions in total abdominal, trunk, and visceral fat, but also provided significant increases in fat-free mass and aerobic power.

**Bottom Line:** While exercise has many benefits, high intensity strength/interval training has been found to produce superior results in a fraction of the time.

## 8. Track Your Foods and Figure Out Exactly What and How Much You Are Eating

In other words it's not how much you eat; it's what you eat that is important. Many people think they're eating "high protein," "low-carb" but tend to drastically over- or underestimate because they fail to track what they are eating. This is dangerous and can lead to unhealthy food intakes and imbalanced diets. I think that for anyone who wants to optimize their diet, tracking things for a while is absolutely essential. It doesn't mean you need to weigh and measure everything for the rest of your life, but doing it every now and then for a few days in a row can help you realize where you need to make the changes and whether you are on track (or not). Again, you will want to boost your protein intake to 30% of calories, just eating more protein rich foods won't cut it. You need to actually measure and fine tune in order to reach that goal. It is also recommended to intake about 40% healthy fats and the remaining 30% carbohydrates from vegetables.

**Bottom Line:** To be successful, don't guess your way through a diet. Measure your intake over a few days and calculate your nutrients to ensure you are in line.

## 9. Get More Sleep

Studies published in The Journal of the American Medical Association and The Lancet suggest that loss of sleep may have a direct effect on how hungry a person becomes the next day. These studies show that not getting a good night's sleep can make you feel more

hungry as your body increases the production of cortisol, a hormone which is released when you're under stress and is responsible for regulating your appetite. Additionally, sleep loss can affect the body's metabolism, which may further interfere with the body's ability to lose weight.

**Bottom Line:** Quality sleep for 7+ hours per night helps your body recover and lose fat.

## 10. Detox Your Body

Most detox programs tend to be fairly short—3 to 21 days—and restrictive in calories. They eliminate fast foods, alcohol, caffeine, sugar and sometimes meat, dairy or wheat. Most focus on vegetables and fruits, sometimes raw, sometimes juiced. Some are based on nutritional supplements such as protein powders others on pills and other concoctions. But all contain "cleansing" elements, like fiber and fluid, meant to remove metabolic wastes from your body. Herbs such as milk thistle or nutritional supplements such as L-cysteine may also be used to stimulate liver enzymes that help break down toxins found in our bodies, including obesity-promoting chemicals such as tributyltin and bisphenol A. Some have you drink a solution of a purified, powdered clay called bentonite, or activated charcoal; both are super-absorbers, both work. Some detox regimes recommend colon-cleansing enemas; others prescribe saunas to help excrete toxins through your skin, not all of these are very effective.

A whole foods approach is preferable to juice fasts or supplement-based programs. Most of the detox programs cause a rapid detox which actually compromises your health since the body needs time to detox, and often we need to target the toxins in order to effectively eliminate them, and that requires a professional's help. The best detox overall is a natural, whole foods diet with some heavy metal detoxing supplements to begin, followed by a blood and liver cleanse (lemon and water) and finally a

tissue cleanse (raw apple cider vinegar and water). This approach supports your liver and colon, improves your metabolism, and helps you lose weight without taking it to extremes that could lead to nutritional deficiencies or fluid imbalances.

**Bottom Line:** Start your diet with a detoxing of both heavy metals and other factors that could affect your success. To determine your approach, use a health care professional who will help you to understand what needs to be eliminated.



## 11. Drink Water

When people are trying to lose weight and shed fat their main goal to long-term weight management should be to raise the metabolism and burn more calories, right? But, what most people fail to realize is that their hydration level directly affects their metabolism. Water is involved with almost every biological function in the body, so therefore your body's metabolism slows down in a dehydrated state. When your body does not have adequate amounts of water, your calorie burning machine (muscles) slow down dramatically. Another important factor to understand is -your body's ability to utilize fat as fuel is also restricted when you are in a dehydrated state. Combine these two factors and you have one slow metabolism! So drink at least half your body weight in water daily. Filter the water to remove the city toxins and enjoy more energy because of it.

**Bottom Line:** Drink water to maintain a high metabolism. **RLM**



# A CAUSE OF DEPRESSION EVERYONE OVERLOOKS

It's hard to imagine that depression could be driven by something other than our perception of stress, but it is true. We often blame stress or our mental state as the cause of our anxiety, depression and fatigue but now we are finding it's not always the case. Stress and anxiety can make any problem worse it's true. But the source of such problems are not necessarily what they seem, and often the causes of our problems, while blamed on our mental state, can often be traced back to our chemical state.

It's true! There are actually nine symptoms that doctors look for when they examine their patients for clinical depression and none affect the tissues or cells of the body. A diagnosis is made if a person has five or more of the

"symptoms" for more than two weeks, or if there is considerable impairment in normal functioning. These nine factors include:

- Feelings of sadness or irritability
- Loss of interest in sex and activities once enjoyed
- Changes of weight or appetite
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless
- Inability to concentrate, remember things, or make decisions
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Restlessness or decreased activity noticed by others
- Thoughts of suicide or death

So, as you can see, there's no tissue culture, no blood test, no neurological exam or image that can be done to

come by the "diagnosis" of depression. It does not exist; however, people with depression have been found to have certain nutritional idiosyncrasies which are very real, and this is where we need to focus our attention.

How so? Well let's look at some of the elements found in our diet that appear connected. Take the artificial sweetener aspartame for instance, a sweetener commonly found in soda. Adverse reactions from aspartame are the number one source of side-effect complaints to the FDA, with over 10,000 complaints filed and over 91 symptoms documented that are related to its consumption. Among them are mental adverse effects such as depression and panic attacks. Unfortunately, aspartame toxicity is not well-known



by doctors, despite its frequency of use and FDA complaints. Aspartame is only one of the issues when it comes to anxiety and depression. But a number of studies have shown that aspartame alone has a detrimental effect on brain function, neurological, cognitive, and behavioral health such as depression and anxiety. Some say there's no connection of course. A series of studies sponsored by a Japanese company that manufactures aspartame found no conclusive evidence! In addition to anxiety and depression being connected to aspartame use, there's plenty of evidence showing food additives as being a culprit too. Fifty years ago there were less than 1,000 food additives used in our food, today it's over 10,000, many of which the FDA do not regulate, nor are they aware of their existence.

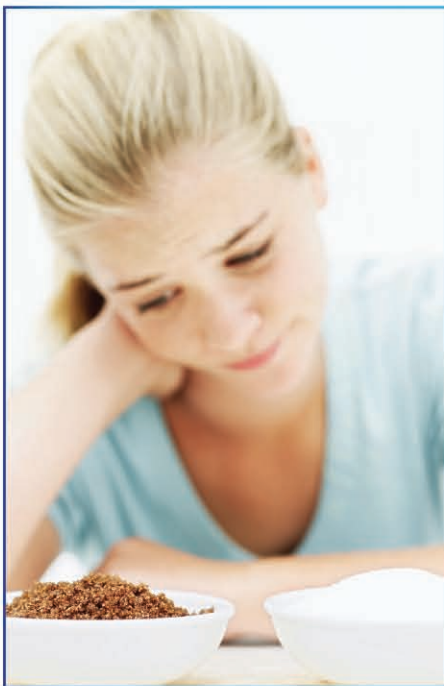
There is a root cause of depression. But we really need to stop stroking the symptoms and understand prevention and effectiveness of treatment.

There's no doubt that radically reducing or eliminating all forms of sugar and artificial sweeteners from your diet is a crucial step to prevent and/or address depression, as well as a host of other health related issues. Quite simply, if you fail to address the root of the problem, you could be left floundering and struggling with an ineffective and potentially toxic Band-Aid for a long time, one that may eventually require medication. Your diet plays an enormous part in your mental health so do not ignore the impact sugar, processed carbs, food additives and artificial sweeteners might be having. Here are six additional strategies that can help you even further:

## Exercise

If you have depression, or even if you just feel down from time to time, exercise is a MUST. The research for exercise and stress is undeniable in this area, with studies confirming that physical exercise is at least as good as antidepressants for helping people who

are depressed. One of the primary ways it does this is by increasing the level of endorphins, the "feel good" hormones, in your brain. It also helps to normalize your insulin and leptin signaling, and helps you regulate adrenalin.



## Eat a Healthy Diet

A factor that cannot be overlooked is your diet. Foods have an immense impact on your mood and ability to cope. Seek out whole foods, organic foods, grass fed meat and wild caught fish. Avoid grains and concentrate instead on nutritionally dense foods. Anything that has been fortified is by definition not nutritionally dense.

## Avoid Sugar and Artificial Sweeteners

Artificial sweeteners have been a major American health disaster, especially aspartame, and should not even be considered as a substitute for sugar. They make recovery for hypoglycemics much more difficult and are a major health hazard. Avoiding sugar and grains will help normalize your insulin and leptin levels, and eliminating artificial sweeteners will eliminate your chances of suffering its toxic effects. Aspartame will also affect your gut health.

## Optimize Your Gut Health


Fermented foods are important for optimal mental health, as they are key for optimizing your gut health. One product, Tula's CokoKefir literally has 40-50 billion probiotics in it, touted to making it better than most supplement forms of probiotics. Do not underestimate the importance of good gut health. Your gut can significantly influence your mind, mood, and behavior. Fermented foods are phenomenal for rebuilding the gut, but be patient it can take up to 6 months or longer to fully repair and rebuild a gut.

## Support Optimal Brain Functioning with Essential Fats

Animal-based omega-3 fats, like krill oil, has a great impact on the human brain and its health. Other fats such as coconut oil have also been found to delay the progression of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. This may be the single most important nutrient to battle depression and dementia.

## Optimize Your Vitamin D

Making sure you're getting enough sunlight exposure to have healthy vitamin D levels is a crucial factor in treating depression or keeping it at bay. One study after another has found people with low D have more depression. Another study found that people with the lowest levels of vitamin D were 11 times more prone to be depressed than those who had normal levels. Vitamin D deficiency is actually more the norm than the exception, and has previously been implicated in both psychiatric and neurological disorders.

Depression is a very serious condition. It's a set of signals or markers that your body and your life are out of balance and that your body is interacting badly with your diet. Consider returning nutritional balance to your life, and one of the key ways to doing this is addressing your diet for combatting depression. 



# What Does It Mean to be HEALTHY?

Do you consider yourself healthy? How do you know if you are? There's no shortage of discussion about the factors that contribute to health and how to optimize and improve it. But what is health, really? How do we define it? And can the way we define health actually influence or direct our experience of it?

Some people define health as a blood chemistry thing, others a certain body fat level or by how they feel, and there are those who define their health by how active they are. So which of these are correct? The concept of health is so familiar that many of us have never thought much about what it really means, or if, in fact, those ideals are reasonable or obtainable.

If asked, most people may define health as "the absence of disease." And in fact, if you look up "health" in the dictionary, you'll find a very similar definition: "the condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit; especially: freedom from physical disease or pain." But what of those days that you do have pain? During those brief periods are you suddenly unhealthy? Are you an active person who has pain every now and again. Sometimes you may over exercise, which may cause a little ache that lasts a week or two then dissipates. Others may have bigger aches and pains. In the end, you may have your own definition of perfect health!

So, while the common definition of health certainly has some teeth, it's too limiting and overly simplifying to be of any real value. Let's put it this way, imagine someone (we will call him John) who is the picture of physical health: he has boundless energy, a sharp mind, no chronic conditions, and rarely (if ever) get colds and flus. He has a slim frame, even muscular, and he always appears happy. But in his private life he is withdrawn, has no lasting relationships, does not contribute to his family or others needs and is depressed.





Now consider Amanda who in many ways is the opposite of John. Amanda struggles with low energy and is often bloated and gassy after she eats. Her digestion is weak and she may have an autoimmune disease. Amanda has difficulty sleeping even though she is tired all the time, and she is plagued by muscle aches and knots. Unlike John, Amanda's life is incredibly rich and satisfying: she has deep, nourishing relationships with others, she does meaningful work that makes a difference in the world, she is full of joy and humor, and she loves to have a good time.

The question is, which of these two are truly "healthy"? Both? Neither? If you had to choose between the lives of

these two, which would you choose?

Of course, there is another possibility: Someone who is healthy physically as well as mentally, emotionally, and socially. Someone who is healthy does not have constant aches and pains but may every now and again struggle with some ache or pain. Someone who is active, has energy and sleeps well may be considered healthy. Sure it's what most of us aspire to, and it's a perfectly natural and valid goal, but is it obtainable?

So how must we change these expectations? Perhaps we should begin by understanding that we are a work in progress. That nothing great ever accomplished was accomplished

overnight! Instead of trying to fix your symptoms by bouncing from herb to supplement, from doctor to therapist, or from medication to gizmo, we should understand that our present state is the start line, not the finish line, and our story is yet to be written.

Now, shift your approach by letting go of the relentless pursuit of your end vision to slowly chipping away at your own daily needs now. What if you focused on enjoying the journey and not the final goal? Do you think you might get more meaning from life, more joy, and more success? Of course you would, and what's more you would not be caught in the imbroglia of the now versus the then.

## Beginning a New Journey

Create a journey in which we embrace each day as a step towards accomplishment. To do this we must first eliminate the things that cause us problems (sugar, processed carbohydrates, excessive alcohol, soda, etc.) and instead begin to adopt new eating patterns that arrest the spiral of decent. Not all at once, if you love your soda, cut your consumption in half, then half again when it feels right. Slowly shrink the carb helping and increase the vegetable helping. Begin by walking a few blocks a day rather than running that 5K. Make it your intention to do

10 pushups and 10 sit ups each night, then expand it to as many as you can! The point is to do something versus nothing, even if that something is seemingly insignificant.

To achieve anything, we need to focus on the things that we can control rather the things we cannot. Can you improve the quality and time of your sleep? Can you stretch and exercise daily? Can you substitute the cereal in the morning for something a little healthier? The changes you make will be small, but in time they will energize you, invigorate your mind and your body. Just understand that your mind

is a powerful tool. How you frame your problem has great influence on whether you live with it or do something about it.

So now we have stopped defining health as "the absence of disease," we instead should search for some other definition that makes more sense. From a mental state we could begin to define it as anything that gives us more joy and motivation to become someone who feels better. But health is more than mental, it is physical too, and the physical being often defines the mental. So the question is how can we become more physically healthy without any working definition of it.





## The Inflammation Culprit

Most of us are suffering from one or more conditions which influence our long term health, and sadly we have no idea how to eliminate it or treat it. Most all of these “conditions” first manifest as something quite innocent, and often either undetected or dismissed as age, a bad day or what other argument we can conjure to explain it. Nonetheless, the most common symptom is inflammation. Therefore, the place to begin is to address our inflammation in order to address our health.

Inflammation is the body’s way of telling us something is not quite right. So perhaps we need to explore why we have it, and how to eliminate it from our body. And to do that you need to slowly change your lifestyle into something that does not cause pain and inflammation.

Inflammation controls our lives. It manifests as pain, obesity, peripheral neuropathy, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, migraines, thyroid issues, dental issues, digestive issues, cancer, the list is long and as yet we still only scratch the surface of what it really is. It may seem foreign to you, but the majority of inflammatory diseases start in the gut with an autoimmune reaction which progresses into systemic inflammation.

The guts ability to absorb nutrients fluctuates in response to a variety of chemically mediated conditions. For example when your cortisol (stress hormone) is elevated due to the stress of an argument or your thyroid hormone levels fluctuate due to burning the midnight oil your intestinal lining becomes more permeable. In the long term, foods such as fake sugar and processed carbohydrates chemically destroy the guts ability to absorb nutrients and over time the gut breaks down, allowing larger gaps for food absorption than is necessarily healthy.

Then you sit down to eat and

partially undigested food, toxins, viruses, yeast, and bacteria have the opportunity to pass through the intestine and access the bloodstream. As your diet remains primarily based on bad food, fast food and processed foods your gut’s effectiveness is compromised and begins to allow more into your blood stream than your body is able to handle. This is known



as leaky gut syndrome. At first, there are few symptoms. A little indigestion or bloating and gas perhaps. Perhaps a feeling of unease. As the condition spirals the symptoms worsen. That’s because the intestinal lining is repeatedly damaged due to reoccurring leaky gut syndrome, damaged cells called microvilli become unable to do their job properly. The gut begins to have difficulty digesting and utilizing/absorbing nutrients and enzymes that are vital to proper digestion. Eventually, digestion is impaired and absorption of nutrients is significantly affected. As more exposure occurs, your body initiates an attack on these poorly digested food particles assuming them to be a foreign invader. The response is inflammation, allergic reactions, and other symptoms we relate to a variety of diseases.

It may sound relatively harmless,

but this situation can and often does lead to numerous serious and debilitating conditions. Since your immune system can become overburdened, these inflammatory triggers are cycled continuously through your blood where they affect nerves, organs, connective tissues, joints, and muscles.

The presence of inflammation is what makes most disease perceptible to an individual. It can and often does occur for years before it exists at levels sufficient to be apparent or clinically significant. You may be tested and find you do not have Celiac disease, a common argument, but nonetheless know that if you have sensitivities to it then the process is in play. In reality, those sensitivities are warning signs of things yet to come. How long it has been fermenting really determines the degree of severity of the disease and often the prognosis assuming the inflammation can be controlled.

What western doctors might tell you is that the ability to be inflamed is absolutely necessary for any normal repair processes to occur. And when we are talking about an acute injury or trauma, they are correct. But it is when the regulation of inflammation is not properly controlled that we begin to have a problem with inflammation.

Why is the inflammation bad then? The answer is not a simple one, but many of the inflammatory diseases we suffer from do not present as gut issues, which complicates diagnosis.

Since we understand that inflammation is commonly initiated in the gut, it should be a logical starting point in the evaluation process of any patient, right? Again, clearly a good naturopathic approach is required in order to pull yourself from this problem. There are seven common areas that should be considered when looking at causative factors which create the environment for chronic inflammation.



These are:

- **Diet Related Factors:**  
Alcohol, Gluten, Casein, Processed Foods, Sugar, Fake Sugar, Fast Food.
- **Medication Related Factors:**  
Corticosteroids, Antibiotics, Antacids, Xenobiotics.
- **Infection Related Factors:**  
Such as H-Pylori, Yeast or Bacterial Overgrowth, Viral or Parasite Infection.
- **Stress Related Factors:**  
Increased Cortisol, Increased Catecholamines.
- **Hormonal Related Factors:**  
Thyroid, Progesterone, Estradiol, Testosterone levels.
- **Neurological Related factors:**  
Brain Trauma, Stroke, Neuro-degeneration.
- **Metabolic Related Factors:**  
Glycosylated End Products (inflammatory end products of sugar metabolism), Intestinal Inflammation, and Autoimmune.

In reality it's not just food, but food can trigger the most responses when paired with other factors, such as stress or infection. Once the immune system is compromised with the leaky gut syndrome, there is an inflammatory cascade that takes place by any inflammatory trigger (diet, medications, infections, stress, hormonal, neurological, or metabolic) which can break down the intestinal permeability and allow for the leaky gut mechanism to flourish.

In the long run, your immune system, or what's left of it, will begin to recognize leaking proteins as other similar proteins like cerebellum, thyroid, etc... When that occurs you will experience symptoms that generally are far removed from what someone would consider to be food related problems since they are not necessarily felt in the gut.

You might experience brain fog, pain, fatigue, poor sleep patterns,

anxiety, or endocrine dysfunction. When antibodies combine with our structural proteins, specific genes are turned on in a special type of immune cell in the body. Inflammatory chemicals are created (here's those cytokines again), which are strongly damaging to all systems within your body.

An autoimmune disease is not clinically diagnosed until you have tissue destruction. Are you willing to wait for that? Or would you rather do something about it now? If you wait, it may be too late. Some neurodegenerative conditions need up to 70 percent demyelination (nerve damage) before it will show on an MRI.



## To Be Healthy

So, what can we do now? First of all, if you are dealing with inflammation you need to get a comprehensive evaluation to look at what is perpetuating your condition. This will require a stool sample (for parasites), a blood sample for blood chemistry, and a number of other evaluations that any good naturopathic doctor can do.

Next, you need to address your diet. You may have to go on a restrictive diet to begin with. Your primary goal is to stabilize your blood sugars, remove food autoimmune triggers (sugar, fructose, processed carbs, dairy and peanut butter),

you also need to promote intestinal integrity with proper flora (probiotics of 40 billion or stronger) and nitric oxide and glutathione pathways. It is important to include fermented foods daily too.


Next, strength train. Believe it or not, strength training, especially whole body vibration releases myokines. These myokines combat the destructive force of cytokines and thus has an anti-inflammatory effect.

Next, remove adverse stress from your life. This includes poor sleep, distress, over exercising, blood sugar regulation issues, burning the midnight oil, overwork and negative

environments as much as possible. Lifestyle factors (stress) can trigger immune markers, which turns on the immune pathway.

Finally address your lifestyle and take back control of your

life. Perhaps as we

consider the question, what is health, we should consider health more of an absence of inflammation, or at least establish a cytokine level that predicts risk to be more accurate? Either way, we do not become healthy overnight, it is done in small doses. So, instead of focusing on your perfect body, focus on doing something today, the next day and the next. Instead of dreading those pushups, find ways to enjoy the idea of the accomplishment. You need to move beyond the drudgery of your pain and instead focus on that which brings the joy back into your life. Are you ready to live your life under your own terms? So what are your terms? 



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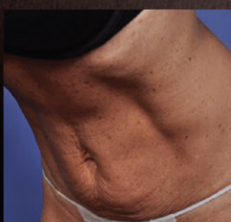
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## TIPS

## Towards a More Productive

## YOU

**Wake Up Early**

One way to kick start a productive, satisfying day is to wake up early. Waking up early allows you to use as much daylight as possible. Many people feel less productive when there is less sunlight. That is why some people fade away on rainy days or hibernate during winter and neglect important tasks. Also, waking up early gives you time to organize and prepare yourself for your day. Getting yourself organized will make sure that you do not forget any necessities for the day ahead. Waking up early also allows you to perform the next two tips.



A huge daily disappointment may occur more often than not when you have a huge to-do list and most of it is not completed. Have you ever woken up with a lot of plans and hopes for the day, but before you knew it, it was sundown and few of your plans had been met? Where else would the phrase "So much to do, so little time," have come from? Another popular phrase related to the loss of time phenomena is "Time is money". Would you like to become a more productive person, cross off tasks on that intimidating, yet important, to-do list, and potentially make more money? Well, here are some tips to create a more productive you.

**Eat Breakfast**

After you wake up, you need to eat breakfast. The old cliché that breakfast is the most important meal of the day is correct. Breakfast gives you the energy you need to go about your day. It also allows you to be comfortable and satisfied, while preventing any unnecessary, embarrassing stomach growls. Start your day with a green smoothie. One favorite recipe is: 8 ounces of water, 2 handfuls of organic spinach, 1 apple, 2 stalks of celery and a juiced lemon. This drink is high in fiber, which will help rid the body of toxins and provide you with the vitamins and minerals needed for high energy levels.

**Eat to Succeed**

We really are what we eat. The "eat to succeed" mentality is fully understanding that what we put into our bodies greatly effects our focus, energy and well-being throughout the course of the day. A junk food diet will lead to a junk performance. When we start our day by consuming foods that increase our energy, focus and well-being, we instantly set ourselves up for a productive day.





## Establish a Morning Ritual

Next, it is important for you to establish a morning ritual. Whether it is exercising, showering, applying make-up, or enjoying a cup of coffee with the morning paper, you must make sure that you are mentally and physically prepared for your day. Make sure all your hygiene needs are met and that you are in a calm, positive state of mind in order for your day to run smoothly and for you to feel confident.

## Exercise

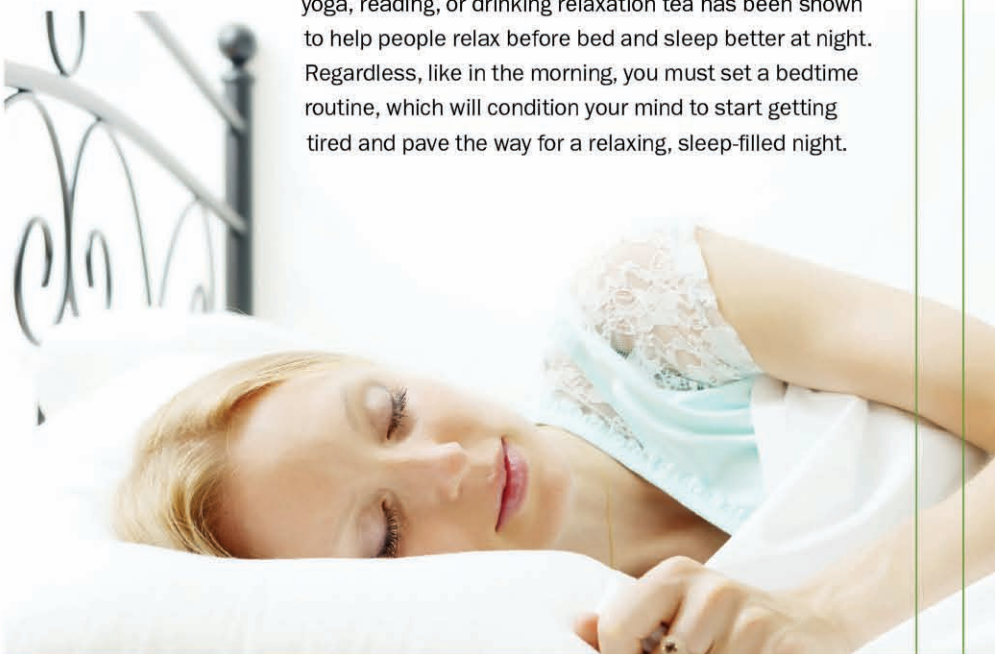
At some point during the day, you should also make time to exercise. Exercising in the morning is a great way to make sure you have energy and start your day off in the right mindset. A midday exercise session will also wake you up, so you can focus on the rest of your day and bypass that afternoon crash. Exercising at night is a great way to relieve stress. This will allow you to relax at night so you will be able to sleep better and wake up refreshed. Also, working out after work will burn enough stress to allow you to get anything you want done while you are at home. Everyone has that to-do list for home and hope to get something done after work. This can be accomplished if you have a fresh boost of energy and less tension after exercising. Plus, exercise gives you endorphins! Endorphins make you happy. Happy people don't act negatively, they just don't. If you are too stressed out, it could lead to negative actions, such as substance abuse, developing unhealthy habits, or worse. If you are hungover or unhealthy, your chances on being productive are not as high as they would be normally.

## Organize Yourself

Once you are ready to begin working, you must organize yourself. Whether you need to create a to-do list, set countless alarms, write on colorful sticky notes that you will post all over your station, or maintain a color-coded planner, you need to have in mind what you will be doing that day. If you are not organized, then tasks can be missed, you will be confused, and you could become stressed. Once you have laid out your tasks, you should prioritize them in order of importance and difficulty. It is best to get the most important and difficult tasks done first while you have the most energy, concentration, and time. The easier and less important tasks can be scattered in free portions of your day, since they will be less time consuming.


## Get Proper Sleep

Finally, at night, you must get a good night's sleep. In order to do this, it is recommended to sleep in a cool, quiet, dark room, in a comfortable bed with a blanket. Also, it is recommended to stop using technology a little before bed in order to allow your mind to start relaxing before demanding it to shut down. Lastly, doing meditation, yoga, reading, or drinking relaxation tea has been shown to help people relax before bed and sleep better at night. Regardless, like in the morning, you must set a bedtime routine, which will condition your mind to start getting tired and pave the way for a relaxing, sleep-filled night.



## Create a Do Not Disturb Mentality When Necessary

How many times throughout your day has someone come into your office and interrupted you just to talk about nonsense? Chances are you are getting interrupted via text, phone or email throughout your day. If you work in an office, set up a "Do Not Disturb" sign when it's time to get important work done. If you are able, completely silence and stow your phone away so there is no distraction or urge to stray from the task at hand.

All in all, take care of yourself and you will be a more productive person. To become a more productive person though, you must first decide to do so. Don't beat yourself up over how unproductive you've been or relish over how productive someone else is. This will never get you to where you need to go. Making the decision is half the battle. Once you've made up your mind, you will begin to challenge yourself to see just how much you can accomplish any given day. Give a shout out to a productive day! 



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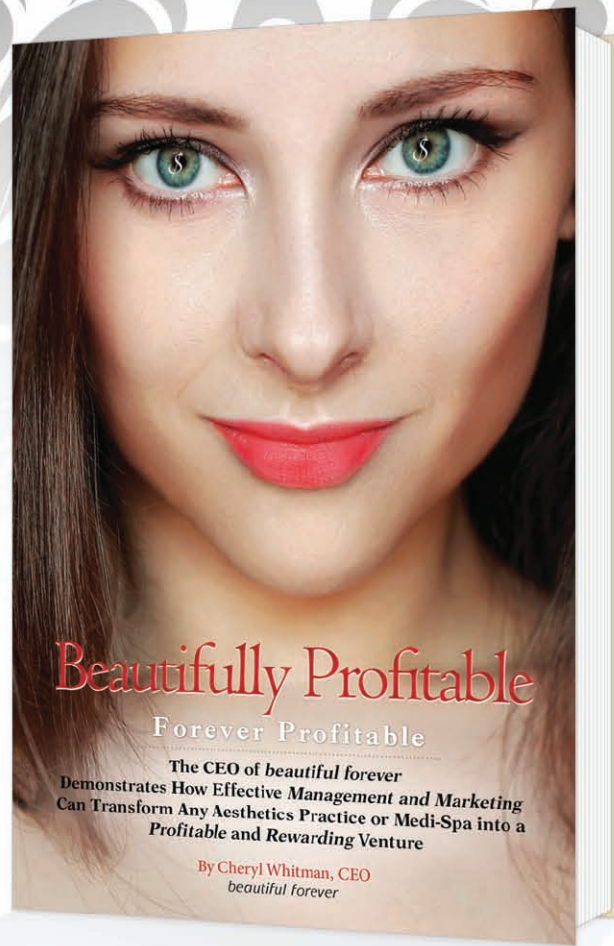
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