

QUICK SUPPERS: Half the work—twice the flavor

October 26, 2009

Fast
Easy



First *for women*

DODGE THE FLU

7 easy ways to bolster your body's defenses by 76%

ENERGY NOW

News! The cream that revitalizes your thyroid in 72 hours

STRESS CURES

Alicia Silverstone reveals her favorite tension tamers

STOP A CYBER BULLY

3 things that really work

BODY BLISS

New looks that will flatter you

DROP 16 LBS THE FIRST WEEK

Fix a broken METABOLISM

Have you ever dieted? If so, there's an 87% chance your metabolism has radically slowed, say researchers

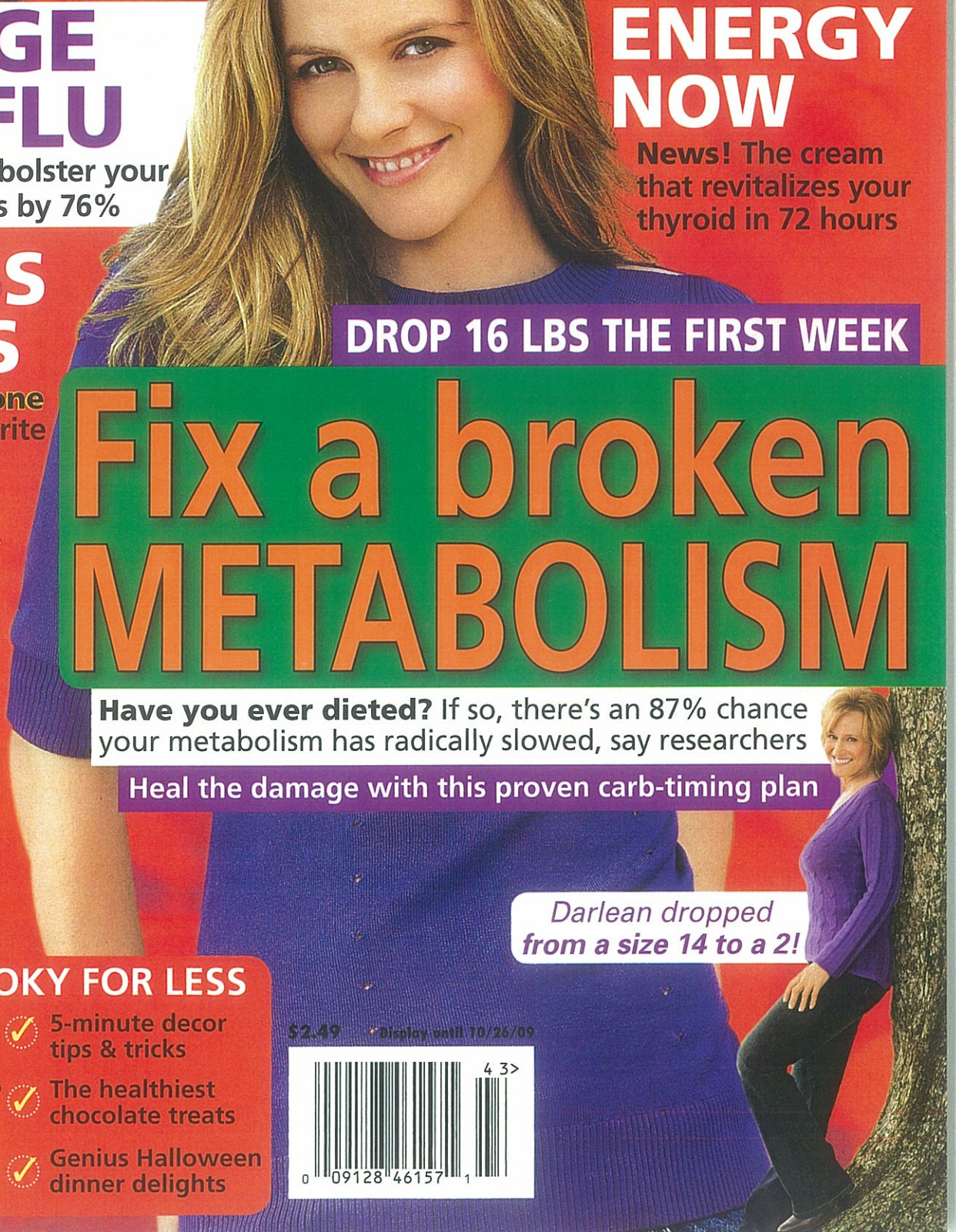
Heal the damage with this proven carb-timing plan

Darlean dropped from a size 14 to a 2!

SPOOKY FOR LESS

- ✓ 5-minute decor tips & tricks
- ✓ The healthiest chocolate treats
- ✓ Genius Halloween dinner delights

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Found! Natural sleep aids that really work

How to stop tossing and turning *tonight*—without the worrisome drawbacks of drugs

Recent surveys by the National Sleep Foundation reveal that recession-related worries have left over 25 percent of Americans wide-eyed at night. No wonder sales of some drugstore sleep medications have soared by 33 percent since last year. But such drugs demand serious caution: One study linked over-the-counter sleep meds to an increased risk of cognitive slowdowns. They can also come with side effects such as dizziness, dry mouth and GI distress that persist well into the next day—and that goes for prescription formulas, too. “These symptoms translate into increased difficulty sleeping the following night, and taking drugs again only perpetuates the cycle,” says naturopathic physician Holly Lucille, N.D., head of Healing From Within Healthcare in Los Angeles. To the rescue: three safe, natural ways to fall asleep, stay asleep and wake up happy.

Can't drift off? Try valerian

Supplementing with valerian-root extract one hour before bedtime can speed the transition from wakefulness to deep sleep by up to 36 percent, according to studies at Germany's Humboldt University of Berlin. “The herb's active *valepotriates* and *valerenic acid* have a mild sedative action that calms brain circuitry, so the body eases more readily into slumber,” says Dr. Lucille. Her recommended dose: 160 to 480 mg of a brand like Nature's Way Valerian Nighttime Natural Sleep Aid (\$19 for 100 tablets, at HouseofNutrition.com), which rated highly in quality testing by ConsumerLab.com. As a bonus, this product also contains calming lemon-balm extract. Just note that in rare cases valerian can have a stimulating effect, so discontinue use if restlessness occurs.

Wide awake at 3 A.M.? Try a melatonin-amino blend

In studies at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, volunteers who took melatonin (a sleep hormone produced by the brain) reduced their sleep disturbances and nighttime awakenings by over 90 percent. The results are even better when 5-HTP is in the mix. “This amino acid is used by the body to produce melatonin, so its addition ensures a steady supply that helps sustain sleep,” explains Michael Lyon, M.D., medical and research director of the Canadian Center for Functional Medicine in British Columbia. Dr. Lyon, an adviser for the health-supplement brand Natural Factors, recommends their Stress-Relax Tranquil Sleep formula (\$16 for 60 chewable tablets, at WebVitamins.com), which delivers 3 mg of melatonin and 30 mg of 5-HTP in each two-tablet dose. Take it 30 to 45 minutes before bedtime.

Wake up tired? Try Relora

This patented ingredient, used in several supplement brands, is made from magnolia bark and cork tree. In research at Cincinnati's LaValle Metabolic Institute, 86 percent of Relora takers experienced more restful slumber and greater feelings of refreshment upon awakening. The credit goes to the blend's ability to reduce levels of cortisol, a stress hormone that can keep the brain in a state of hyperarousal overnight and lead to morning tiredness, says study author Jim LaValle, N.D. He advises taking a product containing 200 to 250 mg of Relora three times daily, with the last dose being an hour before bedtime. One to try: Source Naturals Relora 250 mg (\$13 for 90 tablets, at LifesVigor.com).

Research updates



Millions of women need whooping cough vaccine

This reminder from William Cochran, M.D., who attributes rising rates of whooping cough (*pertussis*) to vaccination gaps among adults. Roughly 28 percent of pertussis cases occur among people whose childhood immunization has lapsed. **The advice:** Women who haven't had a pertussis vaccine in the past 10 years likely need a booster.

SOURCE: William Cochran, M.D., vice chairman, Janet Weis Children's Hospital, Danville, PA

Bladder pain linked to food allergies

So say allergist C. Steven Smith, M.D., and urologist John Hubbard, M.D. Their preliminary findings suggest that 35 to 40 percent of patients with *interstitial cystitis* (IC), a painful bladder condition, also suffer from allergies to foods. Inflammatory histamine released in response to allergens may trigger or worsen IC. **The bottom line:** Women with persistent bladder complaints should consider allergy testing.

SOURCE: C. Steven Smith, M.D., Accredited Asthma & Allergy Care, Louisville, KY

PUMPKIN PROTECTS AGAINST BREAST CANCER

Its rich stores of alpha-carotene, an antioxidant precursor of vitamin A, boost cells' resistance to cancer-causing damage. This lowers a woman's risk of disease by up to 35 percent.



Media Bakery. Still: HBB. Text: Malissa Gotthardt.