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The Quick Fix: Napping

If you are feeling run down during the day a power nap may be just the thing to rev you up.

By Ellen Michaud with Julie Bain



From [Sleep to Be Sexy Smart and Slim](#) Originally in [Sleep to Be Sexy Smart and Slim](#)

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Yeah, we know. You didn't sleep well last night. So why not take a nap?

Studies show that not only will you feel better almost immediately, says Sara Mednick, Ph.D., a sleep medicine researcher at the University of California at San Diego and author of *Take a Nap! Change Your Life*, but a daily nap of between 20 and 90 minutes before 4:00 P.M. will also increase your mental performance, reduce your chances of gaining weight, and make you feel a whole lot more like having sex after dinner than you probably do now. What's more, it won't affect your nighttime sleep.

All told, a nap, according to Dr. Mednick, will:

- Increase your on-the-job alertness by 100 percent
- Sharpen your thinking so you make more accurate judgments and better decisions
- Ramp up your productivity
- Regenerate skin cells so you look younger
- Increase your sex drive
- Help you lose weight by altering metabolism and shifting chemicals that affect appetite
- Reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, and other cardiovascular problems
- Lift your mood by bathing your brain in the neurotransmitter serotonin
- Speed up your ability to perform motor tasks, like typing, operating machinery, even swimming
- Improve your accuracy -- in everything
- Improve the way your body processes carbs, which reduces your risk of diabetes
- Sharpen your senses so you take in what's important in your environment -- and screen out the 24-hour culture chatter that surrounds us
- Put your brain into its creative gear so you can come up with fresh ideas
- Trigger a naturally occurring hormone that blocks the destructive chemicals produced by stress
- Boost your ability to learn something new -- and, better yet, remember it
- Zap the need for drugs like caffeine and alcohol to manipulate your mood and energy level
- Relieve migraines Improve your nighttime sleep by eliminating that wired feeling and thus shutting off the brain chatter
- Make you feel good all over

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