

The image features three wooden bowls filled with nuts on a white wooden plank background. The top-left bowl is filled with hazelnuts, the top-right bowl with walnuts, and a smaller bowl in the center contains pistachios. The text 'EAT FAT, GET THIN' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

**EAT FAT,  
GET THIN**

**DIABESITY SOLUTION**



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# INTRODUCTION

Chronic disease affects half of all Americans and accounts for 84 percent of our \$3.8 trillion health care bill. This would be depressing except for one simple fact: Most of these chronic illnesses are lifestyle-related diseases. That means they're preventable, treatable and often even reversible through changes in lifestyle factors like [diet](#), [exercise](#), and [stress](#).

More specifically, the food we eat (or don't eat) is the single biggest driver of chronic illness – everything from heart disease to diabetes, cancer to dementia, arthritis to autoimmunity, and more.

*Simply put, food can cause disease, but it also can cure disease.*

That's what Joanne Schwien learned when she did the *Eat Fat, Get Thin* program. After 40 days, Joanne's blood pressure normalized, her A1C was lower than it has been in 15 years on medication and her aches and pains went away. After the 4th day, she was able to get off both her diabetes and blood pressure medication. And she lost over 50 pounds!

Joanne didn't need one diet for her diabetes, another for her high blood pressure, and yet another for her heartburn. She simply needed real food – anti-inflammatory food, detoxifying food, blood-sugar-balancing food, in other words, the *Eat Fat, Get Thin* plan.

## A Pill for Every Ill

As a doctor trained in conventional medicine, I was taught there is a pill for every ill, which is how someone like Joanne ends up on medication. But those meds didn't make her better. She was still sick and had what I call "F.L.C. syndrome" – that's when you Feel Like Crap! And now after 40 days on the *Eat Fat, Get Thin* Plan, Joanne feels better than she can ever remember.

The beauty of the human body is that if you take out the bad stuff and put in the good stuff, the body heals. And it doesn't take long – often just 21 days. And if you are really sick, you can continue. Then in 40 days most chronic problems will dramatically improve or go away entirely.

## Why I Created my E-Book Series

I created this eBook to provide a simple road map for using food as medicine. The science behind it is derived from the emerging view that food is not just calories but information – instructions that control your gene expression, hormones, immune system, and brain chemistry and provide the raw materials to build every cell of your body. The food you eat even determines which gut bacteria flourish in your digestive tract – good guys or bad

guys. Each bite is literally controlling every function of your body. Again, food is not just calories.

*Food is information.*

The *Eat Fat Get Thin* Plan is scientifically designed to reverse most chronic disease by eliminating all non-food substances that send messages of disease to your body. This way of eating is designed to eliminate cravings and food addiction and be low glycemic, anti-inflammatory, gut healing, brain boosting, and blood-sugar balancing.

It is based on the science of [Functional Medicine](#), which addresses the root causes of illness, not just the symptoms. In other words, Functional Medicine treats the whole organism – not just the organs.

## Is There a Different Healing Diet for Each Disease?

The good news is that there is not a separate diet for preventing and reversing *each* of the hundreds of different chronic diseases. There is one basic healthy human diet that gets to the root of *all* illness.

And, yes, there are differences between people – some need more or less of this or that, or have unique needs, or have food sensitivities. But *Eat Fat, Get Thin* is a level setter – it will help you reboot and reset, and then you can make adjustments to find out what is perfect for you.

## One Diet, Many Diseases

This e-book is designed to show you how to use the *Eat Fat, Get Thin* Plan to address autoimmunity, diabetes, high cholesterol, hypertension, irritable bowel syndrome, migraines and premenstrual syndrome. But the good news is that if you have ANY chronic illness, *Eat Fat, Get Thin* can have profound benefits.

*A few days away from health and happiness*

And it doesn't take long. You are just a few days away from health and happiness. This approach won't work for everyone, or work all the time, but for the 80 percent or more of people suffering with chronic disease that is caused by what they are eating – or more importantly, what they are *not* eating – this approach will provide dramatic and quick benefits.

Try it for 21 days. If you are not better, try it for 40 days. And if you are still not better, it is time to see a [Functional Medicine](#) doctor to help you get to deeper roots such as chronic infections, environmental toxins, parasites and more.

Now let's review how this approach can help diabetes.

# DIABESITY: THE PROBLEM

Half of all Americans have a deadly disease that makes them fat, sick, and will kill them. And 90 percent of those people don't even know it. What's worse, most doctors are not trained to find the disease, if they are even looking for it.

This problem will cost us \$3.5 trillion over the next 10 years and will bankrupt our economy.

I am talking about diabetes, the number one cause of obesity, heart disease, cancer, dementia, and of course, type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is a continuum of disease that ranges from mild insulin resistance to full-blown diabetes. We call it many names. See if you recognize any of them:

- Insulin resistance
- Prediabetes
- Metabolic syndrome
- Obesity
- Syndrome X
- Type 2 diabetes

In truth, these are ALL essentially one problem with varying degrees of severity. The diagnosis and treatment of the underlying causes that drive all these conditions are actually the same. That is why I use a more comprehensive term, diabetes, to describe these conditions.

This biological imbalance is our modern plague. Despite the fact that it affects one in two Americans, there are no national recommendations from the government or key organizations to advise screening and treatment of it.

The instances of diabetes are increasing at an astonishing rate. Twenty years ago when I started practicing medicine, not a single state in the nation had an obesity rate over 20 percent. Today, not a single state in the nation has an obesity rate *under* 20 percent.

Type 2 diabetes has tripled since the 1980s. There are now 27 million diabetics in this country.

The question becomes, "Why?" Why are we facing a diabetes epidemic? Why are our current treatment approaches failing so miserably? And why is conventional medicine floundering when it comes to diagnosing the biggest health threat of our time?

# The Problem with Our Approach to Diabetes

Modern industrial medicine treats disease with medication or surgery. That's what it is designed to do, and when it comes to emergency interventions it is still the best medicine in the world. When someone comes into the emergency room with a severed leg, for example, conventional medicine treats the problem with incredible efficacy.

Yet when it comes to chronic illness, this approach simply doesn't work.

Why does conventional medicine tend to break down in the face of chronic illnesses like diabetes? Because most medicine today is based on clear-cut, on-or-off, yes-or-no diagnoses that often miss the underlying causes and more subtle manifestations of illness. Most conventional doctors are taught that you either have a disease or you don't. You either have diabetes or you don't. There are no gray areas.

Practicing medicine this way is extremely misguided because it misses one of the most fundamental laws of physiology, biology, and disease: *The continuum concept*. There is a continuum from optimal health to hidden imbalance to serious dysfunction to disease. Anywhere along that continuum, we can intervene and reverse the process. But, the sooner we address it, the better.

Take diabetes. Most doctors just follow blood sugar, which actually rises very late in the disease process. If your blood sugar is under 126, according to conventional medicine, you don't have diabetes. If it's over 126, you do have diabetes.

But these distinctions are completely arbitrary, and they do nothing to help treat impending problems. I remember one patient, Daren, who came to see me with mildly elevated blood sugar. I asked Daren if he had seen his doctor about this. He said yes. I then asked, "What did your doctor say?" Daren's doctor had told him, "We are going to wait and watch until your blood sugar is more elevated, and then we are going to treat you with medication for diabetes."

This attitude is absurd and harmful in the face of what we know about the problems that occur even in the absence of full-blown diabetes. Science is now showing us that many people with pre-diabetes never get diabetes, but they are at severe risk just the same. Pre-diabetes isn't pre-anything; it's a serious health condition and needs to be treated as early as possible.

More to the point, this approach completely ignores subtle clues from symptoms and signs of disease, which may highlight underlying metabolic imbalances (especially when complemented by further testing).

These imbalances may be remedied by the appropriate treatment – treatment not focused on some disease, but instead treatment that works to remove those things that alter or damage our functioning, and provides those things that enhance, optimize, and normalize our functioning by balancing the system rather than treating the symptom.

We need to treat the system, not the symptom; the patient, not the disease.

Consider the man in the emergency room with the severed leg. For that person, identifying what severed the leg isn't likely to make a difference between life and death. The symptom – the severed leg – must be treated if he is going to survive.

But that paradigm simply doesn't hold true for health conditions like diabetes. This mechanistic model of conventional medicine can be applied in some health crises, but it doesn't work when it comes to chronic disease.

## The Real Causes of Diabetes

To effectively treat diabetes, we must shift our focus away from the *symptoms or risk factors* of the disease and begin taking a hard look at the *causes*. All of our attention is on treatments that lower blood sugar (diabetes drugs and insulin), lower high blood pressure (anti-hypertensive drugs), improve cholesterol (statins), and thin the blood (aspirin).

But we never ever ask the most important question: Why is your blood sugar, blood pressure, or blood cholesterol too high, and why is your blood too sticky and likely to clot?

Put another way: What are the root causes of diabetes? Answering that question must be the focus of our diagnosis and treatment of the disease if we are going to solve this global epidemic.

The good news is that the answer is shockingly simple.

The entire spectrum of diabetes including all of its complications – diabetes, elevated blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol – are simply downstream symptoms that result from *problems with diet, lifestyle, and environmental toxins interacting with our unique genetic susceptibilities*.

Those are the real causes of diabetes.

And the reason these dietary and lifestyle factors lead to diabetes is because they create a condition known as *insulin resistance*. Contrary to what most people think, type 2 diabetes is a disease of too much, not too little, insulin. Insulin is the real driver of problems with diabetes.

When your diet is filled with empty calories and an abundance of quickly absorbed sugars, liquid calories,<sup>1</sup> and carbohydrates like bread, pasta, rice, and potatoes, your cells slowly become resistant to the effects of insulin and need more and more to do the same job of keeping your blood sugar even. Thus you develop insulin resistance.

A high insulin level is the first sign of a problem. The higher your insulin levels are, the worse your insulin resistance. Your body starts to age and deteriorate. In fact, insulin resistance is the single most important phenomenon that leads to rapid and premature aging and all its resultant diseases, including heart disease, stroke, dementia, and cancer.<sup>2 3</sup>

As your insulin levels increase, it leads to an appetite that is out of control, increasing weight gain around the belly, more inflammation and oxidative stress, and myriad downstream effects including high blood pressure; high cholesterol; low LDL; high triglycerides<sup>4</sup>; thickening of the blood; and increased risk of cancer, Alzheimer's, and depression.

These are all a result of *insulin resistance* and too much insulin. Elevated blood sugar is not the source of the problem.

Because insulin resistance and diabetes are a direct outcome of diet and lifestyle, the condition is *100 percent reversible* in the vast majority of cases. Most people just need to eliminate the things that are sending their biology out of balance and include what's needed to help the body rebalance itself.

For most people, the interventions required are extremely simple and extraordinarily effective.

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# DIABESITY: THE SOLUTION

Most people believe diabetes is not reversible. That's unfortunate, considering its numerous complications, including kidney failure, amputation, stroke, and dementia. I've also heard experts claim obesity is difficult to treat and maintaining long-term weight loss is almost impossible.

I wholeheartedly disagree. Science shows diabetes and obesity *are* preventable and reversible with nutrition and lifestyle modifications.

Diabetes is caused, in large part, by the 152 pounds of sugar and 146 pounds of flour a year eaten on average by every American – that's basically a toxic drug dose of diabetes-causing food.

It is well known that massively obese patients can reverse their diabetes within a few weeks of getting a gastric bypass, even if they haven't lost that much weight. Why? Because food is medicine and when you take disease-producing food out and put the right food in, the healing happens quickly.

Fortunately, a number of natural strategies can help reverse obesity and diabetes without prescription drugs or other invasive measures. Those strategies include a whole-foods diet, targeted supplementation, exercise, and stress management.

# WHAT TO EAT

## General Dietary Recommendations to Help Lower Your Risk of Diabetes

The first step in tackling diabetes is to eat a healthy diet. Increase your consumption of whole foods rich in phytonutrients, plant molecules that give your body the nutrients it needs.

Here are some practical tips you'll see in *Eat Fat, Get Thin*:

- **Pull the sugar.** A diet full of empty calories and quickly absorbed sugar, liquid sugar calories, and refined carbohydrates – all of which convert to sugar – creates high insulin levels, eventually leading to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Chronically high insulin levels lead to many problems, including inflammation, high blood pressure, poor sex drive, increased risk for cancer, and depression. The most important thing you can do to reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes and obesity or reverse its impact is to eliminate or dramatically reduce sugar in all its many disguises.
- **Eat Fat:** Use ONLY good, healthy fats and clean (grass fed or sustainably raised) animal foods. You should include fat at each meal. The best sources are avocados, extra-virgin olive oil, nuts and seeds, extra-virgin coconut butter, organic full-fat coconut milk, whole organic eggs, fatty fish (sardines, wild salmon, mackerel or herring), grass-fed lamb or bison, or beef or organic poultry.
- **Stock up on real foods.** Whole, unprocessed real foods balance your blood sugar, reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, and improve your liver detoxification to prevent or reverse insulin resistance and diabetes. Whole, real foods turn on all the right gene messages, promote a healthy metabolism, reverse insulin resistance and diabetes, and prevent aging and age-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.
- **Eat about 4 to 6 ounces of protein with each meal.** If you make a fist, that's approximately portion size we're talking about per meal.
- **Avoid all gluten and dairy.**
- **Avoid all processed junk food**, including sodas, juices, and diet drinks, which impact sugar and lipid metabolism. Liquid sugar calories are the biggest contributors to obesity and diabetes and heart disease.

- **Eliminate all hydrogenated fat**, which is found in margarine, shortening, and processed oils, as well as many baked goods and processed foods.
- **Eat only fat, protein, and veggies for breakfast.** You can choose from a variety of protein shakes or delicious egg recipes (omega-3 eggs are ideal) to wake up your metabolism first thing in the morning.
- **Include flaxseeds** by adding two to four tablespoons of ground flaxseeds every day to your food. (This can lower cholesterol by 18 percent and contribute to overall cardiovascular health.) Flax is tasty in shakes or sprinkled on salads.
- **Avoid beans and grains:** Both can spike your blood sugar.
- **Drink a minimum of 8 glasses** of pure, clean water throughout the day.
- **Eat the rainbow.** Eat at least 8 to 10 servings of vegetables every day, which contain disease-fighting vitamins, minerals, fiber, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory molecules.
- **Use salt**, because when you cut down carbs your body needs more salt.
- **Try not to eat three hours before bed.**

# The 21-Day Meal Plan

Eating a clean diet is one of the best ways to heal the body AND to figure out what foods might be triggering your diabetes. When you do the *Eat Fat, Get Thin 21-Day Plan* you will automatically eliminate those allergies and sensitivities and be able to see how your body reacts.

Here is your step-by-step, delicious sample meal plan for one week of the *Eat Fat, Get Thin 21-Day Plan*. You can find more recipes in the back in my latest book *Eat Fat, Get Thin*. We have included vegan options - just look for the [V] symbol.

## WEEK 1

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
<b>Monday</b>	Cocoa Bliss Smoothie  V	Chicken Chop Salad with Hearts of Palm and Creamy Herb Dressing	Crispy Seared Duck Breast with Blueberry Balsamic Sauce]  Side: Asparagus
<b>Tuesday</b>	Broccoli Sausage Frittata	Quick Chicken Breast with Spanish Romesco Sauce	Braised Chicken with Creamy Cashew Gravy  Side: Brussels sprouts
<b>Wednesday</b>	Ginger Spice Smoothie  V	Basic Salad with Vinaigrette Dressing  V	Spiced Lamb and Vegetable Shepherd's Pie  Side: Green beans
<b>Thursday</b>	Quick Herb and Avocado Omelet	Poached Chicken Breast	Clam Chowder  Side: Broccoli

<b>Friday</b>	Kiwi-Lime Smoothie	Bistro Flank Steak Salad with Baby Green Beans	Sun-Dried Tomato and Turkey Burgers with Avocado Cream  Side: Broccolini
<b>Saturday</b>	Triple Green Smoothie	Turkey Lettuce Wraps with Creamy Cashew Lime Dressing	Spiced Beef Taco Wraps with Guacamole  Side: Snap peas
<b>Sunday</b>	Almond Pancakes with Berries	Beef and Veggie Stuffed Peppers	Lemon-Dill Shrimp and Avocado Salad  Side: Zucchini

## The *Eat Fat, Get Thin* Staples List

Below is a list of all the staple items you will need for the Eat Fat, Get Thin 21-Day Plan and another list of the ingredients you will need for the meal plan above.

- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Extra-virgin coconut oil
- Other healthy oils, such as walnut, sesame, flax, or avocado
- Grass-fed butter or ghee
- Nut butters (raw, if possible), such as almond, cashew, coconut
- Nuts, such as walnuts, almonds, pecans, cashews
- Seeds, like hemp, chia, flax, pumpkin, and sesame
- Tahini (sesame seed paste)
- Unsweetened canned full-fat coconut milk
- Unsweetened hemp milk, almond milk, coconut milk
- Canned or jarred Kalamata olives
- Frozen blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, unsweetened acai berry puree

- Almond meal
- Arrowroot
- Apple cider, Balsamic, unseasoned rice, red wine, white wine vinegars
- Reduced-sodium, gluten-free tamari
- Reduced-sodium broth (vegetable or chicken)
- Dijon mustard (look for pure mustard without sugar or chemicals)
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Capers
- Seasonings and dried spices, such as turmeric, cayenne pepper, thyme, rosemary, chili powder, cumin, sage, oregano, onion powder, cinnamon, coriander, cilantro, paprika, and parsley

## Shopping List for Week 1

### Vegetables:

You can eat an unlimited amount of non-starchy vegetables, such as these:

- Cauliflower (2 heads)
- Asparagus (1 bundle)
- Leeks (3 small)
- Shallots (2 small)
- Zucchini (3 small)
- Broccolini (1 bundle)
- Red bell peppers (5)
- Snap peas (½ pound)
- Broccoli (2 heads)
- Avocado (8)
- Green beans (12 ounces)
- Spinach (1 pound)
- Scallions (7)
- Grape tomatoes (½ pint)

- Roma tomatoes (7)
- Celery (10 stalks)
- Kale (1 bunch)
- Red onion (1)
- Yellow onions (4)
- Baby field greens (1 pound)
- Butter lettuce (2 heads)
- Red cabbage (1 head)
- Brussels sprouts (2 pounds)

*Great resources:* Local farmer's markets, Cascadian Farm, Earthbound Farm, Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Miracle Noodle, Stahlbush Island Farms.

## **Fruits:**

Choose organic, seasonal, local produce whenever possible. (Sometimes organic fruits and vegetables are best purchased frozen during winter months.)

- Fresh Blueberries (2 pints)
- Kiwi (2)
- Limes (8)
- Lemons (4)

## **Non-Dairy Milks:**

- Almond Milk (1 32-ounce carton)
- Coconut Milk (4 13-ounce cans)
- Cashew Milk (1 32-ounce carton)

## **Butter and Oils:**

- Grass-fed butter
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Extra-virgin coconut oil
- Avocado oil (small bottle)

## **Poultry, Meat, Fish, Eggs:**

Look for organic, grass- or range-fed, antibiotic- and hormone-free poultry and eggs.

- Chicken breast (5 ½ pounds)
- Fresh small clams (4 pounds)
- Omega-3 eggs (1 ½ dozen)
- Italian chicken sausage (2 links)
- Flank steak (1 ½ pounds)
- Ground dark turkey meat (2 ¼ pounds)
- Grass-fed beef (2 ½ pounds)
- Ground lamb (1 pound)
- Duck breasts (4 6-ounce breasts)
- Bay shrimp (1 ¼ pounds)

*Great resources:* Applegate Farms, Peaceful Pastures, Whole Foods Market, local farmers' markets, Crown Prince Natural, Ecofish, SeaBear, Vital Choice Seafood

## **Fresh Herbs:**

- Parsley (1 bunch)
- Cilantro (1 bunch)
- Ginger (1 3-inch piece)
- Basil (1 bunch)
- Dill (1 bunch)
- Thyme (2 bunches)

## **Spices, Dried Herbs, Condiments:**

Choose from any of the following to enhance your recipes and taste experience (watch out for added chemicals, sugars, MSG, and hidden sources of gluten or dairy):

- Garlic (5 heads)
- Nutmeg
- Red pepper flakes
- Bay leaves
- Saffron
- Chipotle powder

- Organic mayonnaise
- Tarragon
- Red pepper
- Cayenne pepper

*Great Resources:* Flavorganics, Frontier Natural Products Co-Op, Penzey's Spices, Rapunzel Pure Organics, Seeds of Change, Simply Organic, The Spice Hunter

### **Canned Foods:**

- Diced tomatoes (2 cans)
- Hearts of palm (1 can)
- Roasted Red Bell Peppers (1 8-ounce jar)
- Sun-dried tomatoes (1 8-ounce jar)
- Clam broth (16 ounces)

### **Other:**

- Unsweetened cocoa powder
- No-alcohol pure vanilla extract
- Coconut flour
- Baking soda
- Duck fat (1 pound)
- Silken tofu (4 ounces)

# WHAT TO TAKE: SUPPLEMENTS

- A high-quality multivitamin and mineral
- One to two grams of omega 3 fatty acids
- 1,000 to 2,000 IUs of vitamin D3
- 300 to 600 mg of alpha lipoic acid twice daily
- 200 to 600 mg of chromium polynicotinate
- 2.5 to 5 grams of [PGX](#), a unique type of fiber that [controls appetite and blood sugar](#), just before each meal with eight ounces of water

Other nutrients also play a role in balancing blood sugar and normalizing insulin levels, and I've discussed these more fully in my book *The Blood Sugar Solution* or on [this page](#).

I have also put together a unique combination of supplements that is designed to provide a foundation for cellular sensitivity to insulin as well as sustain the metabolism of fats and sugars. This bolsters healthy metabolism, blood sugar balance, cholesterol levels, and more.

This kit is the [PureLean Pure Pack](#), which offers support for healthy glucose metabolism, lipid utilization, and weight management as part of a healthy lifestyle with a reduced calorie diet and regular exercise.

Each pack contains:

- 3 PureLean® Nutrients vegetable capsule
- 1 EPA/DHA with lemon softgel capsule
- 1 Alpha Lipoic Acid w/ GlucoPhenol vegetable capsule
- 1 Magnesium (glycinate) vegetable capsule
- 1 Taurine 1,000 mg. vegetable capsule

## Recommended Use:

Take 1 packet per day (7 capsules) with a meal or as directed by your healthcare practitioner.

For advanced blood sugar balance, consider the [10-Day Detox Combo Pack](#), which includes all of the healthy foundational vitamins and nutrients needed for healthy blood sugar support in the basic plan kit as well as four special herbs that have been used to enhance insulin sensitivity and balance blood sugar for centuries.

# WHAT TO DO: OTHER LIFESTYLE FACTORS

## Exercise

Get the right exercise. You don't need to spend hours at a gym – even a 30-minute walk can help. *Vigorous* is the key for effective exercise that helps balance blood sugar and lower insulin levels. Get your heart rate up to 70 to 80 percent of its maximum capacity for 60 minutes, up to six times a week.

Step it up a few notches with high-intensity interval training (HIIT) and strength training. Studies show HIIT can benefit [type 2 diabetes](#) and [obesity](#). Best of all, you can do it in just minutes a day. I also encourage strength training to build muscle and reduce body fat composition.

Exercise is not a luxury. It's a necessity when it comes to preventing almost all chronic disease, from heart disease to cancer, from dementia to diabetes, from osteoporosis to osteoarthritis. You cannot age successfully without it. It is simply how we are designed.

## Reduce Stress

In the face of chronic stress, our levels of insulin, cortisol, and inflammatory compounds called cytokines all increase. This drives the relentless metabolic dysfunction that leads to weight gain, insulin resistance, and eventually type 2 diabetes. The links between stress, weight gain, mental disorders, and blood sugar imbalances show that managing stress becomes a critical component of obesity and diabetes management.

You can't eliminate stress, but you can learn to control it. Finding ways to manage stress and to relax is essential for dealing with nearly all chronic health conditions.

Learn to reduce stress by doing regular relaxation exercises such as yoga, tai chi, meditation, breathing, guided imagery, or whatever it takes to engage the relaxation nervous system, which can lower your inflammation and blood sugar levels as well as increase metabolism and [help with your overall health](#).

Try classes, buy CDs (you can try [my UltraCalm audio program](#)), try therapy, or just go out and have fun. Do whatever it takes to hit the pause button on a daily basis and maintain your health. (Check out my blog to learn [five ways to never be stressed again](#).)

## Sleep

Lack of sleep or poor sleep damages your metabolism, spikes sugar and carb cravings, makes you eat more, and increases your risk for numerous diseases, including type 2 diabetes.

One study among healthy subjects found even [a partial night's poor sleep](#) could induce insulin resistance. That's why you must prioritize sleep so you get eight hours of solid, uninterrupted shuteye every night.

I used to think that "MD" stood for "medical deity" and meant I didn't have to follow the same sleep rules as every other human being. I stayed up late working long shifts in the emergency room, ignoring the demands of my body. It wasn't until I learned that shift work leads to a shortened life expectancy that I quit.

Unfortunately, our lives are infiltrated with constant stimuli that keep us revved up until the moment we go to bed. It's no wonder so many of us have trouble getting restful sleep.

Instead of pushing through until your head hits the pillow, try to take a little "holiday" in the two hours before bed. Create a sleep ritual – a special set of little things you do before bed – in order to guide your body into a deep, healing sleep.

Here are some tips on how to restore your natural sleep rhythm. It may take weeks or months, but using these tools in a coordinated way will eventually reset your biological rhythms:

- **Practice the regular rhythms of sleep.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- **Use your bed for sleep and romance only**, not for television or even reading.
- **Create an aesthetic environment that encourages sleep.** Use serene and restful colors and eliminate clutter and distraction.
- **Create total darkness and quiet.** Consider using eyeshades and earplugs.
- **Avoid caffeine.**
- **Avoid alcohol.** It may help you get to sleep initially, but it causes interruptions throughout the night, resulting in poor-quality sleep.

- **Get at least 20 minutes exposure to daylight daily.** The light from the sun enters your eyes and triggers your brain to release specific chemicals and hormones like melatonin that are vital to healthy sleep, mood, and aging.
- **Eat no later than three hours before bed.** Eating a heavy meal prior to bed will lead to a bad night's sleep.
- **Don't exercise vigorously after dinner.** It excites the body and makes it more difficult to get to sleep.
- **Write your worries down.** One hour before bed, write down the things that are causing you [anxiety](#) and make your to-do list for the next day to reduce your worry. It will free up your mind and energy to move into deep and restful sleep.
- **Take a hot salt/soda aromatherapy bath.** Raising your body temperature before bed helps to induce sleep. A hot bath also relaxes your muscles and reduces tension physically and psychically. By adding 1 to 1 ½ cups Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate) and 1 to 1 ½ cups baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) to your bath, you will gain the benefits of magnesium absorbed through your skin and the alkaline-balancing effects of the baking soda, both of which help with sleep.
- **Get a massage or stretch before bed.** This helps relax the body, making it easier to fall asleep.
- **Warm your middle.** This raises your core temperature and helps trigger the proper chemistry for sleep. A hot-water bottle, heating pad – or a warm body – can do the trick.
- **Avoid medications that interfere with sleep.** These include sedatives (which are used to treat insomnia, but ultimately lead to dependence and disruption of normal sleep rhythms), antihistamines, stimulants, cold medication, steroids, and headache medication that contains caffeine.
- **Use herbal therapies.** Try 200 mg of passionflower, or 320 mg to 480 mg of valerian root extract standardized to 0.2 percent valerenic acid one hour before bed.
- **Take 200 mg to 400 mg of [magnesium](#) citrate or glycinate before bed.** This relaxes the nervous system and muscles.
- **Other supplements and herbs can be helpful in getting some shuteye.** Try calcium, theanine (an amino acid from green tea), GABA, 5-HTP, and magnolia. (I like a product called Kavince UltraPM that has a form of GABA, melatonin, and 5-HTP all in one. It works well for many of my patients.)
- **Try 1 mg to 3 mg of [melatonin](#) at night,** which can help stabilize your sleep rhythms.
- **Get a relaxation, meditation or guided imagery CD.** Any of these may help you get to sleep.

# CONCLUSION

In order to beat diabetes, most people simply need to eliminate the things that are sending their biology out of balance and include what's needed to help the body re-balance itself. For most people, the interventions I've described here are extremely simply and extraordinarily effective.

In *Eat Fat, Get Thin*, I outline all of the social, economic, biological, and medical underpinnings of this health epidemic and provide a 21-day, step-by-step plan that will allow you to dig deep into your own biology and heal even the most severe cases of diabetes.

Also, please take a look at [\*The Blood Sugar Solution Cookbook\*](#), where I show you how you can delight your palate and your senses with fabulously tasty food and heal your body at the same time.

As I've said many times before, the most powerful medicine is at the end of your fork, not at the bottom of your pill bottle. Food is medicine!

If you are willing to tweak your diet and lifestyle and take a few supplements, your health may change dramatically – and so will your life.

If you have tried the *Eat Fat, Get Thin* plan for at least 40 days and are still not completely better, then you should seek out a Functional Medicine practitioner. You can come see me or one of my Functional Medicine doctors at [The UltraWellness Center](#) or at the [Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine](#) where we treat people from all over the world. You can also find a trained practitioner near you through the [Institute for Functional Medicine](#).

The answers are right in front of you. Treat the underlying causes of your illness, and you will begin to experience vibrant health once more.