

In Good Hands

A Free Monthly Newsletter For The Friends and Patients of: **The Maryland Spine Institute**

"Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble, at a touch; nay, you may kick it about all day like a football, and it will be round and full at evening". - Oliver Wendell Holmes

What If You Could Stop Sleeping And Never Feel Tired Again?

Plus: Death By Cell Phone?

Maryland – Let me ask you a question: When's the last time you went to bed... slept all night... and woke up in the morning completely and totally refreshed?

Not just feeling 'okay'. But, you actually had to jump out of bed immediately because you were so full of energy you just had to go do something...

Better yet...

Has That EVER Happened To You?

If it has... it probably hasn't been in a long, long, long time. Am I right?

Chances are every single morning is a struggle. The sound of your alarm is nearly earth shattering, followed by several rounds of the snooze button, then a half gallon of coffee... and even after that... you're still tired!

If fact, chances are, if you are like most people, you're tired right now.

That's a safe bet because, according to the National Sleep Foundation, over 70% of Americans get less than the recommended eight hours of sleep per night.

But did you really need that statistic when all you had to do was look at the massive lines at Starbucks and Dunkin Donuts!

Clearly, society has been self-medicating with caffeine for sleep deprivation for a long time.

And the reason why is clear...

There Is Simply Not Enough Time To Get Enough Sleep!

Really. Who can work 40 hours a week (or MUCH more), take care of their house, raise their kids and do all the other things of everyday life... and still have 8 hours left over to snooze?

And even on the rare occasion that you have the time, the stresses and strain of your life (mortgages, credit card debt, etc.) keeps you wide awake, staring at the ceiling for half the night!

But what if there was a way to NOT sleep and... somehow... feel as if you did?

Just imagine how much better you would feel, not to mention how much more you could get done.

Well, that's exactly what researchers are working on.

Scientists May Have Found A Drug That Eliminates Sleepiness

Here's what's going on: A nasal spray containing a naturally occurring brain hormone called Orexin A reversed the effects of sleep deprivation in monkeys, allowing them to perform like well-rested monkeys on cognitive tests.

The discovery's first application will probably be in treatment of the severe sleep disorder narcolepsy.

The treatment is "a totally new route for increasing arousal, and the new study shows it to be relatively benign," said Jerome Siegel, a professor of psychiatry at UCLA and a co-author of the paper. "It Reduces Sleepiness Without Causing Edginess."

Orexin A is a promising candidate to become a "sleep replacement" drug. For decades, stimulants have been used to combat sleepiness, but they can be addictive and often have side effects, including raising blood pressure or causing mood swings.

The military, for example, administers amphetamines to pilots flying long distances, and has funded research into new drugs like the stimulant Modafinil and Orexin A in an effort to help troops stay awake with the fewest side effects.

The monkeys were deprived of sleep for 30 to 36 hours and then given either Orexin A or a saline placebo before taking standard cognitive tests. The



monkeys given Orexin A in a nasal spray scored about the same as alert monkeys, while the saline-control group was severely impaired.

The study, published in the Dec. 26 edition of *The Journal of Neuroscience*, found Orexin A not only restored monkeys' cognitive abilities, but made their brains look "awake" in PET scans.

Siegel said that Orexin A is unique in that it only had an impact on sleepy monkeys, not alert ones, and that it is "specific in reversing the effects of sleepiness" without other impacts on the brain.

Dr. Michael Twery, Director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, said that while research into drugs for sleepiness is "very interesting", he cautioned that the long-term consequences of not sleeping are not well-known.

Both Twery and Siegel noted that it is unclear whether or not treating the brain chemistry behind sleepiness would alleviate the other problems associated with sleep deprivation.

"New research indicates that not getting enough sleep is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease and metabolic disorders", said Twery.

Still, Siegel said that Americans already recognize that sleepiness is a problem and have long treated it with a variety of stimulants.

"We have to realize that we are already living in a society where we are already self-medicating with caffeine," he said.

He also said that Modafinil, which is marketed as Provigil by Cephalon and AlerteC in Canada, has become widely used by healthy individuals for managing sleepiness.

"We have these other precedents, and it's not clear that you can't use Orexin A temporarily to reduce sleep", said Siegel. *"On the other hand, you'd have to be a fool to advocate taking this and reducing sleep as much as possible."*

Sleep advocates probably won't have to worry about Orexin A reaching drugstore shelves for many years. Any commercial treatment using the substance would need approval from the Food and Drug Administration, which can take more than a decade.

Which is a good thing, as Dr. Michael Twery mentioned: The long-term consequences of not sleeping are not well-known.

Maybe... but... they can't be good. Research is showing all kinds of health problems caused by lack of sleep. So the question is...

Will this drug safely replace sleep... or... will it end up causing a devastating crash in the end?

Who knows? Only research will tell for sure (We hope!). But I recommend the natural alternative; proper diet, exercise, chiropractic care, and yes... SLEEP!

Death By Cell Phone?

According to The Associated Press, on November 30, 2007, a 33-year-old Korean man was found dead on November 28, apparently killed by a cell phone battery explosion.

That was the initial declaration made by Professor Kim Hoon at Chungbuk National University after he examined the body.

The man, identified only by his family name, Sur, was found dead by his co-workers at a quarry in North Chungcheong Province, where he was employed as a shovel operator.

According to the co-worker who found him, "He had a mobile phone with a melted battery in his left shirt pocket. His shirt had soot on it in the shape of the phone".

"He was injured in the left side of his chest. His ribs and spine were broken. The explosion punctured his heart and lungs, leading to his death," Kim said.

But two days later, South Korean police stated a co-worker had come forward and confessed

to fabricating the story after accidentally striking Sur with a drilling vehicle. The preliminary autopsy results had also suggested damage to Sur's internal organs that was too great to have been caused by a cell phone explosion.

And don't forget, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your, questions. We're here to help, and don't enjoy anything more than participating in your lifelong good health.

Welcome New Patients!

Here are the new patients that became members of our practice family this last month! We'd like to welcome you publicly, and wish you all the best!

***Peggy Rumsey; Bel Air, MD
Barbara Runsey; Bel Air, MD
Teresa Felder; Abingdon, MD
Beverly Bryant; Northeast, MD
Ray Gunderson; Street, MD
Martin Braun; Bel Air, MD
Kimberley Ziegler; Kingsville, MD
Donald Ponder; Essex, MD
Lisa Brennan; Havre De Grace, MD
Alexa Quaranta; Bel Air, MD
Joe Bucci; Whiteford, MD
Jenna Quaranta; Bel Air, MD
Maxine Braun; Bel Air, MD
Michael Carlson; Fallston, MD
Valerie Kline; Perryville, MD***

Inspirational Story Of The Month –

“How This Amazing Man Lost 400 Pounds With Diet, Exercise, And This ‘Secret’ Ingredient!”

Don't call anyone a liar. I know this month's "Tip Of The Month" (*see next page*) said the keys to losing weight and keeping it off are: (1) Dietary control and exercise. (2) Change your lifestyle. Join a support group... and... (3) Don't be afraid to take a different approach from the crowd. It also said that there were no secrets. And now... all of a sudden... there IS a "secret" ingredient to weight loss? Well, there is. And you're about to discover the proof in this wonderful story... At 630 pounds, David Smith was a mountain of a man. He lived with his parents and spent most of his time inside... eating junk food and drinking soda. He's even been quoted in the newspaper that he "felt like the elephant man". During that time, David lived a life of shame, embarrassment and social anxiety that made it almost impossible for him to leave his house. "It got so bad to a point that I didn't leave the house and I didn't even feel comfortable in my own backyard until it was dark out", Smith said. Ashamed of his looks, Smith hid inside to avoid public mockery.

An Astonishing Change...

That was four and a half years ago. Today David Smith is 400 pounds trimmer... he enjoys his life... and... is a complete inspiration to countless others. But his almost unbelievable transformation didn't happen overnight. It took over two years of dedicated hard work. And he had a "secret" ingredient... In June 2003, he finally had enough. Smith sent an e-mail to Chris Powell, fitness correspondent for Good Morning Arizona, a local news broadcast on KTVK, in Phoenix. Powell paid Smith a visit. "We were both probably thinking: What are we getting ourselves into right here? There would be no way I'd have anything in common with this guy", Smith said. Powell, a former Cosmo magazine bachelor, was socially confident. But now he was trying to get through to this painfully shy man. "I didn't know what 600 pounds looked like," Powell said. "He couldn't really look me in the eye. He was just so broken. He really didn't know what to say or what to do." Despite their initial awkward meeting, they made a deal. Smith committed to losing the pounds and Powell agreed to stick with him as long as Smith didn't give up. The first stop was a truck scale so they could get Smith's weight. After that, Powell created a food plan for Smith: Six smaller meals to replace Smith's end-of-the-day megameal. The meals were carbo-balanced to increase his metabolism, with cheat days thrown in. In the first month, Smith dropped 40 pounds; then, after just four months of doing simple exercises in the gym, Smith lost 100 pounds. Powell was pleased. But Smith wasn't too impressed with what he had accomplished. "He kept telling me, 'When I look in the mirror, I still feel like the same person. In fact, I still see 630 pounds'," Powell said.

The Secret That Set Him Free...

Then one day after a session, Smith handed Powell a letter he'd written. As Powell read, it began with a revelation that Smith had never shared with anyone else. He had been sexually abused by the first friend he had ever made. "It made me shy away from people, not trust people at all. And, of course I turned to food because it made me happy. It didn't hurt me", Smith said. Gaining more weight all the time, and lacking social skills, Smith found school to be a nightmare. "I've had like sticks and stones and dog feces and, you know, thrown at me and spit on. I've had a broken arm and black, black eyes", recalled Smith. The emotional and physical abuse took a toll; he had dropped out of high school at 17 and headed for his parents' house. Over the next decade, he would rarely emerge. Trapped in a joyless, friendless existence, Smith felt he had no choice but to plan his suicide in a horrific manner. "I felt like I deserved as much pain as possible if I was to kill myself, to burn myself literally in the desert. I just decided maybe dousing myself with gasoline and, you know, maybe people could hear my screams and hear all the despair that consumed me for all these years", Smith said. Powell was moved when he learned what Smith had been through. "He'd never had a chance in life. And I realized how valuable I was to him not just as a trainer, but as the first person in his life who actually believed in him." As the exercises got more strenuous and the pounds kept coming off, Powell began to unlock Smith's personality. Powell decided to reintroduce Smith to the social world that had treated Smith so cruelly. He made preparations at a nearby bar, and when they arrived, Smith was treated like a rock star. "When we got in the car and I'm driving him home he goes, 'That was the best night of my life,'" Powell said. As the pounds continued to fall away, Powell knew Smith needed him now more than ever. All his loose skin gave him the appearance of a deflated balloon. So he embarked on a series of surgeries to eliminate the excess skin, leaving him with 18 feet of scars. Powell was there for all the surgeries.

After 26 months, Smith had locked in on his target weight of 229 pounds, making his total weight loss a whopping 401 pounds. He also enhanced his appearance with Lasik surgery on his eyes and some dental work to fix his teeth, destroyed by too much soda. All of the cosmetic work was donated by Phoenix area doctors. "I even got some cheek implants. I needed help!", laughed Smith. Now 31, Smith has started bodybuilding, working at a gym and studying to become a trainer. Powell never charged Smith a dime for his services or his emotional support. What he got in exchange, Powell said, was far more important. "I was with him through his transformation, but he's been with me through my own journey over the last couple of years, and that's the real reason why we're so close. He's hands down the most genuine person that you'll ever meet. He's got a heart of gold", Powell said of his newfound best friend. Just in case you haven't guessed it already – friendship was the "secret" ingredient that sprung David Smith from his prison. Thank goodness for wonderful people like Chris Powell. The impact they make is immeasurable... and... they make the world a better place for us all.

Did You Know?... Knowing what causes stress for you can help you cope with it better and provide mental and emotional relief. Common causes of stress include: Work, family, health concerns, unrealistic expectations, cynical and negative attitudes, sudden traumatic events. Vitamins and minerals are required to ensure healthy brain and neurological functionality. The Vitamin B Group is particularly relevant to the brain, depression and stress susceptibility. Vitamin C is essential to protect against stress too. Toxins such as alcohol, tobacco smoke, excessive salt, steroids, and other pollutants work against the balance between minerals, vitamins mind and body. Excessive toxins from these sources will increase stress susceptibility and stress itself. Physical exercise is one of the most effective strategies for getting rid of stress. Exercise releases helpful chemicals in our brain and body that are good for us. Exercise distracts us from the causes of stress. Exercise warms and relaxes cold, tight muscles and tissues that contribute to stress feelings. Exercise develops and maintains a healthy body, which directly reduces stress susceptibility. You may be experiencing stress because your life has become out of balance. You may be spending too much time and energy on work or on caring for others at the expense of your own health and well-being. Delegate or share your responsibilities at work and at home. Avoid difficult colleagues, family members, and acquaintances. It may be necessary to reorganize your schedule in order to maintain a more balanced life. Think ahead about how you're going to spend your time. Make a "to-do" list. Figure out what's most important to do. Prioritize tasks and then work on the most important ones. Delegate less important tasks. Schedule extra time for tasks, in case of interruptions. It's important to care for yourself. No matter how busy you are, set aside at least 15 minutes each day in your schedule to do something for yourself, like going for a walk or calling a friend.

Tip Of The Month – Four Weight Loss Tips That Work... ONLY If You Are Serious About Shedding The Pounds This Year!



Are you serious about losing weight... and keeping it off this year? Really serious? 'Cause if you're not, you should stop reading this right now. Allow me to explain... Weight loss is simple. Don't think so? Well, here's what it all boils down to: **Watch what you eat and expend more energy than you consume!** That's the 100% truth, no matter what "secret" you read about on the internet, some magazine or late night infomercial. Fact of the matter is: You gotta burn more than you eat. Plain and simple. Not very romantic... just reality.

So Tip #1 is: Dietary Control And Exercise Onward... Forget about "dieting." Diet is the worst word in the English language – and here's why: Diets don't work! I'm sure you already know this to be true... simply because... I'm sure you've already been on several and had them fail. That's why you should NEVER "diet" again. EVER. In fact – you should erase that word from your memory IMMEDIATELY. Here's what you need to understand instead: A Diet is something you do for a certain amount of time – and then stop. That's why you lose weight... and then... put it all back on with a vengeance. A lifestyle change is much different. A lifestyle change is... by definition... something you do for the rest of your life. And if you want to take the weight off, and keep it off, you need to make a decision to exhibit dietary control and exercise FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

Quick Story: *A dentist teaches one of his new patients the proper way of flossing his teeth. Patient asks the dentist which of his teeth he should floss? Dentist replies: Only the ones you want to keep! So... how long should you exhibit dietary control and exercise? For as long as you want to keep off the weight you have lost.*

Which brings us to Tip #2: Change Your Lifestyle! What's the best way to stick to your new lifestyle changes? Get help! And one of the best ways to get help is to join a group of like-minded people who are trying to achieve the same or very similar goals. This will put you in contact with people who understand what you are going through and will be willing to help and support you. That help and support... in many cases... is the difference between success and failure. The internet has thousands of weight loss communities for you to choose from. Look into them and see which one is a good fit for you. And when you join one – PARTICIPATE! Ask questions. Share stories. You will be helping others as much as yourself.

So Tip #3 is: Join A Support Group. Know This: You are NOT in this alone. Statistics show that the vast majority of Americans are overweight and want to make a change. Most never lose the weight. And the ones that do – most gain it back. That should tell you something extremely important. Which is... Most people are dead wrong when it comes to weight loss. What they are doing did not work for them... so it won't work for you either. You need to take a *different* approach, a contrarian approach that leads you to success. This does not mean joining a support group is counterproductive. A support group can be used for moral support – NOT technical advice. Big difference. So...

Tip #4: Don't Be Afraid To Take A Different Approach From The Crowd. The crowd usually takes the easy way out. Be different and you'll lose the weight and keep it off.