

# ● Ask America's Ultimate Experts

## Q "I want to be a morning person!"

### Expert secrets for waking up energized!

A few adjustments to your daily routines will have you raring to go, says energy expert David Feinstein, Ph.D. Just:

- **Dress up your breakfast table.** Before going to bed, put some flowers on the table or get an upbeat CD ready to play. Having something nice to wake up to will help you bounce out of bed.
- **Skip the late-night snack.** Stop eating three hours before bedtime so your body will devote its energy to deep sleep rather than digestion.
- **Go to sleep by 11 p.m.** Staying up any later causes a small adrenaline spike that could keep you up for hours.
- **Start on a positive note.** When you wake up, think of one task you're looking forward to. Focusing on one pleasant goal makes it seem achievable, which motivates you to get started!



About 85% of us say we'd like to start our days earlier to get the most from our mornings. And shifting your body clock so you start the day energized is easy—with these expert early-riser tips:

### Did you know?

55% of Americans see themselves as morning people, while 41% say they're night owls. But research shows only 10% of us are true morning types and 20% true night owls!

### The morning rituals that will make you happier—and more productive!

With all we have to do, studies show women are almost twice as likely as men to wake up in a bad mood! To boost your optimism and get more done, productivity expert Peggy Duncan advises:

- **Stepping outside.** Getting a daily dose of sun makes you more alert, and being around nature—even for five minutes—is proven to make you happier. Plus, the fresh air helps your brain work more efficiently all day!
- **Hitting the snooze button.** Grabbing an extra 15 minutes of sleep gives you a sense of control over your morning, which makes you feel better about the day.
- **Learning on your way to work.** Listen to an audiobook in your car. Exposing yourself to new information—educational or entertaining—primes your brain to absorb facts more quickly!

### Get more done—and get out the door faster!

Juggling chores all morning? With a little planning, you can make everything run smoothly, says productivity pro Laura Stack. Just:

- **Start the night before.** Get a headstart on tough tasks—like making your dinner menus for the week—at night, when you're less likely to feel rushed.
- **Do things halfway.** Don't get bogged down finishing everything in the morning—focus on what needs to be done now; save the rest for the weekend.



- **Put yourself first.** Don't leave your room until you're completely ready; that way you can take care of your family without backtracking to finish your own routine.

### Win the battle against morning stress

Starting your day on a relaxing note will even out morning anxiety, assures Claire Michaels Wheeler, M.D., Ph.D. Her tips:

- **Take a time-out.** The stress hormone cortisol peaks in the morning—it's designed to get your body moving. To restore your balance, take time for yourself—read quietly or sip some tea.
- **Eat the perfect breakfast.** When stressed, most of us crave carbs like bagels, but eating them can increase your insulin and cortisol levels, making you *more* anxious. To stop stress in its tracks, eat some protein, like eggs.
- **Laugh!** Watch a sitcom while eating breakfast, or read the comics. Laughing reduces stress and gets your blood flowing, which will help wake you up.



### Our expert panel



Psychologist **David Feinstein, Ph.D.**, is the coauthor of *Energy Medicine* and director of the Energy Medicine Institute in Ashland, Oregon ([www.innersource.net](http://www.innersource.net))



Productivity pro **Peggy Duncan** has appeared on NBC's *Today* and is the author of *Put Time Management to Work and Live the Life You Want* ([www.peggyduncan.com](http://www.peggyduncan.com))



**Laura Stack** is a productivity and time management expert and author of *Find More Time* ([www.theproductivitypro.com](http://www.theproductivitypro.com))



**Claire Michaels Wheeler, M.D., Ph.D.** is a physician and psychologist who wrote *10 Simple Solutions to Stress* ([www.stresshappiness.com](http://www.stresshappiness.com))