



Exercise for better sleep; sleep for better exercise

By Lisa Zeigel

I hate to admit it, but I am not a morning person! My natural tendency is to go to bed late and to rise late, which is not a good habit if you are a personal trainer. Many of my clients liked to train early before going in to the office, so I would stumble into the gym and force myself to wake up and try to function. I don't have to do this in my current job, thankfully. However, I am realizing that I could really benefit from improving my sleep schedule, knowing that this would not only help my exercise performance, but may also help me avoid the aches and pains that sometimes come with activity.

I started incurring "sleep debt" early on after starting my exercise habit, when I found exercising after work was a big challenge. Around mid-afternoon it seemed impossible that I would be able to summon enough energy at the end of the day to get through a workout, although I was able to, (and I always felt energized afterward). However, every day I had to talk myself into it (most people drop out of exercising because they talk themselves out of going to the gym). So I then got the bright idea that going to the gym before work would be easier, and it was. I liked that I was able to get it out of the way and not have to worry about it. (It was also nice to beat the morning commuter traffic.) To

allow enough time to work out, shower, get dressed, and have some breakfast before I was supposed to be at my desk, (luckily, there was a gym facility in the building) I needed to leave my house by five a.m. But did I get to bed each night in time to get eight hours of sleep? No way! It was more like five to six hours!

I carried on with this sort of routine for years until I noticed I wasn't getting the results I wanted from my exercising, and I started getting aches and pains that would not go away, along with a few minor injuries. I finally came to the realization that lack of sleep was the main contributor to these issues. Since then, I have learned much about the sleep/exercise connection.

One of the first things I hear from people when they begin a new exercise program is about how much better they sleep. This is partly due to enhanced favorable brain activity as well as a person's increased feelings of well-being, ability to handle stress, and more. Throughout each eight to nine-hour period of sleep, we go through four to six cycles of four distinct stages of non-REM in addition to another stage of REM slumber. Each full cycle lasts from 90 minutes to nearly two hours. During these cycles a lot is going on, including repair and growth of muscle and other tissue, metabolic activity, and maintenance and building of the immune system. So you can see that if you're not getting enough hours of sleep, you won't go through as many cycles of these important functions.

Over time, an accumulated "sleep debt" can lead to a variety of difficulties; in regards to exercise, these can include: delayed reaction time (critical in sports), impaired judgment, inability to concentrate, and depression (despite the mood-enhancing effects of exercise). And those are only the mental aspects. Physically, sleep-deprived people suffer from delayed repair of muscles, tendons, ligaments, and fascia, which can lead to ongoing pain and increased risk of injury. The immune system is also compromised, leading to increased incidence of illness. Taking time out from exercise to overcome a cold or

the flu is something I often observe when working with clients, so I know this can create a huge setback for those who are trying to maintain an exercise program.

One of the biggest reasons people exercise is because of the metabolic boost, but this will be diminished with lack of sleep! One reason is due to the restraint of muscle and tissue repair, but in addition, levels of an appetite-suppressing hormone called leptin tend to increase along with an increase of an appetite-stimulating peptide called ghrelin.¹ So if you are eating more, you may be counter-acting the calorie-burning effects of exercise!

And the last thing I will mention is that when you incur a sleep deficit, you just will not have the energy to put in the effort you would like to exercise. Physical activity is normally an energy-booster, but this good effect will be canceled out if your brain's and your body's cells have not had the chance to re-generate. For someone who is trying to make exercise a habit, this could be a factor in whether they continue or drop out!

Lack of sleep and sleep disorders are under-reported problems in our fast-paced lifestyles. Much of this can be addressed by simple changes in our habits, such as:

* Developing a regular sleep schedule (going to bed and rising at the same hours, even on weekends).

* Creating a pre-sleep ritual geared toward relaxation instead of stimulation (e.g. take a warm bath and keep the bedroom dark, cool, and quiet).

* Make sleep a priority!

And although exercise really does help you sleep better, if the timing is wrong, it can also lead to over-stimulation that can have a negative effect, so try to avoid vigorous activity within three hours of your bedtime.

So now that you know more about the sleep/exercise connection, you can take some steps to ensure you get the rest you need to enhance the good effects of activity!

¹ <http://www.medscape.org/viewarticle/502825>

The Zone continues to strengthen in Europe



Dr. Barry Sears with Gabriella Lepre, journalist, Radio Rai Due!, Rome

One of the great things about having foreign partners is that you get to see how they are developing the Zone concept in their countries. Many of their successes can be applied to enhance our delivery of Zone content more effectively in the United States.

My most recent European trip in December took me to Italy, Germany and Austria.

In Italy, the Zone Diet continues to be increasingly embraced by the population. My first day in Italy began with an overcapacity crowd of more than 250 physicians and pharmacists for our biannual Zone Consultants certification course. The registration was shut off three weeks earlier because we had exceeded the capacity of the conference hall. This was followed by several conferences with leading Italian trainers and coaches to educate them about how the Zone Diet technology is the next step for enhancing athletic performance. I also took a trip to Rome for a national TV appearance.

Perhaps one of the most telling highlights of the Italian trip was a lecture I gave in Venice starting at 9 p.m. on a Friday night during the prime Christmas shopping time. It was organized only five days earlier because of a break in my schedule plans, and there was a lottery to allow 75 pharmacists to attend (again due to space constraints) that Friday night. The fact that they came at possibly the most unpopular time and then asked exceptionally insightful questions after a two-hour lecture was indicative of their thirst for more knowledge about the Zone.

Then it was off to Germany for the launch of my new German book on the Zone Diet. A freak snowstorm in Frankfurt made it impossible for me to give my first lecture at the Austrian Anti-Aging conference. Fortunately, one of my top Zone physicians in Italy Dr. Daniela Morandi was able to give the lecture and received excellent reviews by the attendees. The next day I gave a lecture to an overflowing crowd at the conference. On the last day, Lynn and I were able to squeeze in a couple of hours of sightseeing in a very cold Vienna before flying back to Boston.

The two weeks in Europe provided me with some very fruitful insights about the growing worldwide interest in the Zone Diet.

New Web sites to better serve our Zone community

After nearly a year in development, Zone Labs' new Web sites are up.

These Web sites are part of our ambitious effort to transform our sites into a consumer-friendly, content-driven informational resource to help everyone reach their personal goals.

"For the first time in Zone Labs' history we can now talk specifically to the unique needs of each of our three distinct consumer interests: Weight Loss, Long-term Health, and Athletic Performance," Petter Etholm, Zone Labs CEO, said.

Although the content for each of the sites is different, the same Zone dietary approach is used to reach the distinct goals of the user.

The first generation of our new Zone Web sites will have weekly blogs based on breaking research that are applicable to each particular site. We are already working on a second generation in which video content becomes a more integral part of each site. This includes testimonials, interviews on health and performance topics, and how-to cooking demonstrations with our new Zone Foods.

"With your continued input, we hope to make each of our new Zone Web sites your primary resource for health and wellness that leads to a better and longer life. I welcome you to our new Zone Community," Dr. Sears said.

To get started, go to zonediet.com. For questions, call 1-800-404-8171.



Zone brings great changes to his life

I ran the City to Surf in Sydney from 1986 to 1997 from age 39 to 50. But I noted that every year I was a few pounds heavier than I was the year before. I could never quite understand it because I was exercising pretty much the same each year. A work associate Don Carter had the same experience. A typical lunchtime meal at work would be an apple, an orange and a banana after our run! They are all "healthy" per se, and we thought we were doing the right thing.

It wasn't until early 2000 that I happened to be talking to my biochemist brother-in-law, Ed Carr, about my unexplained weight gain. I asked him did he know of any decent diet books to read?

He mentioned a book about the Zone Diet. I told him I would look it up, but before long it had slipped my mind.

I think I finally picked it up from the bookstore in August 2000, and then it sat in a brown paper bag until the November when I decided to take it with me when we traveled to Perth to visit a mate. That gave me the opportunity to actually take it out of the paper bag and take the time to start reading it. At that stage I had absolutely no clue of how profound the book's message was going to be. Anyway, it wasn't long before Barry's words were really hitting home. My thoughts at the time were, why didn't I start reading this months ago?

The more I read, the more things started to become clear as to why I had experienced a weight gain. It also became clear that a lot of what I thought was right about healthy eating was all wrong, and that I would have to unlearn a whole lot and replace it with some learned science. Another learning point was that I was starting to feel empowered with the knowledge that I could take control on eating matters.

The more I read, the more enthused I became. It all made so much sense.

I decided that on our return to Sydney I would give it a go. After all, it sounded good what I had read, but how would I

know? I was no expert. The proof of the pudding would be in the eating.

My weight at that stage was about 92 kg (202pounds). My wife, Gail, was overweight as well, and her mother was staying with us over Christmas.

Gail hadn't read the book, so she was unconvinced about any dietary changes, but her mother was at least willing to try. It just meant I would have to work out what to eat to get into the Zone. To get off to a good start each day, I took over making breakfasts, and I still do today.

It probably took a few months to really start to change our routine. At first I found I didn't have any suitable protein in the fridge for our snacks. But I soon found that turkey breast was a handy thing to have for this purpose. Low-fat cheese and macadamias were also great for snacks.

I also by this stage had bought the book "A Week in the Zone," which helped me get a feel for the block method.

What was remarkable about "A Week in the Zone" was that all the benefits Barry said would happen occurred exactly as he had stated. Things like, in the first week you will not lose weight, but your belt will be a little bit looser than before; you will feel more alert; you won't feel hungry between meals. Like Barry said, it wasn't rocket science.

It should be mentioned that at this stage we were not even consuming fish oil. That didn't come until later with the book "The OmegaRx Zone."

Nevertheless, despite Gail's early resistance to change, we were slowly but surely losing excess fat with ease. It couldn't have been easier. It just happened. And the more we lost, the more empowered we felt, the more we saw the power of the Zone and the more we were encouraged to keep in the Zone.



Within six months Gail and I had lost 17 kg (37 pounds) each. Exercise played very little part in the weight loss, by the way. For the last 10 years my weight has been between 72-75 kg, depending on the time of season.

In 2008, I felt so indebted to all Barry had said in his books that I felt obliged to go on a Zone Cruise to meet him and pay homage to him. This we did with the cruise from Boston to Bermuda. We went again in 2009, and we have already booked for the Cruise in 2011, so we can again meet up with all our friends.

As an aside, it wasn't until 2001 that I bumped into Don Carter again, and he couldn't help noticing my trim physique. I took the opportunity to tell him my story, and it wasn't long before he bought and read "The Zone" and had a similar paradigm shift. He, too, became a Zoner, and over the next year or two, his TG/HDL ratio went from 5 to 1.5.

Gail and my TG/HDL ratios have been around 1.0 for years. These days, with the inclination and the energy, I cycle and race most Sunday mornings with the Waratah Masters Cycling Club.

One other thing I think is remarkable is that there are no doubt many Zoners in Australia, but Gail and I, so far, are the only Aussies to go on any of the Zone Cruises. I'm not sure why.

Denis and Gail S. Sydney, Australia

Did you maintain or gain?

By Dave Schreck

I gained! It started in November of 2010. That's when a college friend of mine suggested we go to our college homecoming in Tallahassee, Florida. Fourteen years had passed since I'd been to the University so I thought it would be enjoyable to visit the campus and travel around the Panhandle. Instead of staying near the school, we decided to rent a condo in Panacea on the Gulf Coast. The first night started with dinner at Angelo's Seafood Restaurant -- appetizers of smoked fish dip and raw oysters and an entree of extra-large shrimp sautéed in Cajun butter. I passed on the hushpuppies (not the shoe) the seasoned deep-fried cornmeal and the Key lime pie.

The next day we drove about 50 miles along the Forgotten Coast to Apalachicola, known for its seafood. Our timing was excellent because that weekend was the 47th annual Florida Seafood Festival. I passed on the oyster-eating contest but did manage to sample smoked mullet, seafood gumbo, fried alligator, blue crab, paella, raw oysters, crab cakes, shrimp and more. After just 2 days I knew I was in trouble when my stretch running pants were becoming a little tighter. We still had the tailgate party before the football game on Saturday. Fortunately, it wasn't like what you see on TV, no big BBQ set ups with burgers, hot dogs, sausages, chicken, and chili. Just the remains of a four-foot sub that provided some protein. While I did my best to escape the pre-game festivities, we did stop by a friend's martini table on the way to the stadium. One was plenty. Once inside the stadium I avoided the fried dough and pizza but managed to sneak a hot dog under the grandstands. Three days down and two to go. A few more seafood restaurants and one BBQ joint, and I was on my way back to Boston where I could get back into my routine of daily exercise and Zone meals. But not for long since the holiday parties had already been scheduled. A trip to the South End of Boston for a high-end catered affair, and then a few weeks later our company get together with Zone selections. A few more holiday toasts, fine cheeses, dips, chips, eggnog, even a slice of fruitcake, and I shuffled my expanded waistline into the New Year. I never said I was a Zone angel, and my pants proved it. What happened? While it may have been "balanced," I was consuming too much food.

Have you noticed that instead of maintaining over the holidays, you've been gaining? Interested in having success looking and feeling better? Since more than 90 percent of us fail to keep our resolutions, don't make any! Are you really going to join the gym, double up on your workouts, swim a mile a day, sign up for tai chi, Pilates, or yoga? I thought if I kept it simple, my success would be greatly enhanced by just getting back to a few basic Zone concepts.

Here's your New Year's resolution, "I'll eliminate grains and starches from my diet for just one week. Every meal I'll consume will contain a small amount of lean protein (about the size of the palm of my hand) with lots of colorful, non-starchy vegetables.

And I'll pay attention to how I feel." There are hundreds of classic Zone recipes at www.zonediet.com. Too difficult? Purchase the new Zone baked foods and follow the simple and easy recipes. These new foods are different than any diet food you've had. The new Zone baking technology lets you enjoy the "forbidden" foods that once made you fat. You now control hunger for up to five hours. If you're not hungry, you don't eat as much, and less food means a leaner, healthier you.

We have an exceptional team of qualified Zone customer service representatives and personal Zone coaches who will help you achieve your goals.

Change your life with the least amount of effort. Make 2011 a new beginning. Call us at 800/404-8171.

New ZoneFast Recipe!



Turkey & Tomato Flatbread Sandwich

Comfort foods are again in the Zone, thanks to our ZoneFast Food Program. This week's recipe is great to take to work for a delicious lunch that is in the Zone. The hummus adds some zip to this traditional sandwich, which is back on the menu thanks to Zone Foods.

Total preparation time: 5 min

Ingredients:

- 1 Zone Multigrain Flatbread
- 1 1/2 tbsps Hummus spread
- 2 slices Turkey breast - Louis Rich
- 1 slice Low fat swiss - Sargento
- 1 slice Red onion
- 2 slices Tomatoes
- 2 leaves Lettuce

Directions:

1. Toast the flatbread to your liking, cut in half.
 2. Spread hummus over the flatbread. Layer the remaining ingredients and top with other half.
- Enjoy!