success was keeping a sleep log. It sounded simple enough, but I knew it wouldn’t—couldn’t—be that easy. And it wasn’t. Just take a look at how my six weeks went.

**WEEK ONE:**
Pretty much status quo. I’m still getting up in the middle of the night and averaging about five hours of sleep total. I’m tired and cranky most of the time. And I’m having trouble staying awake until midnight: One night I crash at 9 p.m. Stepanski says I can try going to bed half an hour earlier, but that means I have to get up earlier, too.

**WEEK TWO:**
Even though I’m not yet sleeping through till morning, my middle-of-the-night waking time is down to about one hour from the typical two. On a good night, I get a solid six hours of sleep; a bad night is more like four. Staying at a party until 3 a.m. sets me back, though—I pry myself out of bed 3½ hours later as directed, feeling miserable for the next several days.

**WEEK THREE:**
My eyes refuse contacts. I can’t string words into sentences. I wear the same clothes three days in a row. I’m sleeping between four and six hours a night. One day, I sleep through the alarm. I cheat and take a nap.

I suspect my misery is caused by sleeping-pill withdrawal, but when I call Stepanski, he says my exhaustion is the cumulative effect of being slightly sleep-deprived for several weeks. Instead of making up for lost rest by napping or by popping a pill and going to bed early, I’m forcing myself to stay awake all day, every day. “How you feel on any given day is based on how you slept the last four nights or more,” he says. “It’s not that you had just one hour less than the ideal; it’s one hour less every

**Fertility drug linked to breast cancer**
In a survey of more than 9,000 women between ages 35 and 64, those who had taken human menopausal gonadotropin (hMG) for more than six cycles or for at least six months were between 2.7 and 3.8 times as likely to develop breast cancer as women who had never used fertility drugs, according to a new study in *Fertility and Sterility*. Although hMG was once commonly used, new and more effective treatments introduced in the 1990s have since replaced it. The good news: No other fertility medications have been linked to an increased risk of cancer, and use of hMG for less than six months appears to be safe. More research needs to be done, but if you’re over age 40 and have been given hMG, this is one more reason to get yearly mammograms and regular breast exams.

**Dogs cause more allergy misery than cats**
Cats make more people sneeze than dogs do, but the sniffling and wheezing are likely to be more intense for those allergic to canines, according to new research from Penn State College of Medicine. The scientists exposed 809 people with asthma to dog or cat dander, among other substances; the former triggered the greatest release of nitric oxide in subjects’ lungs and caused the most immune cells to appear in phlegm—two signs of inflammation. To make breathing less of a chore, the researchers recommend trying allergy medicines like Allegra and Claritin, changing your sheets often, and kicking Fido out of bed, where allergens can get trapped and worsen symptoms.

**Calories—not sugar—increase diabetes risk**
You’ve probably heard that your love of sweets could increase your risk of diabetes. But contrary to expectations, women who reported eating the least sugar (less than 35 grams a day—approximately 2½ tablespoons of sugar, or about one 12-ounce cola) were no less likely to develop type II diabetes, the most common form of the disease, than those who ate the most (up to 100 grams daily, or 7 tablespoons, or four candy bars), according to results from Harvard University’s ongoing Women’s Health Study. The researchers reviewed the daily food logs of 38,480 female health professionals ages 45 and older and tallied the women’s sugar intake from sweet treats like candy bars, as well as from fruits, vegetables, and milk. The conclusion: The real key to preventing diabetes is maintaining a healthy weight, not shunning sugar, the study authors say.