

Turn on the lights!

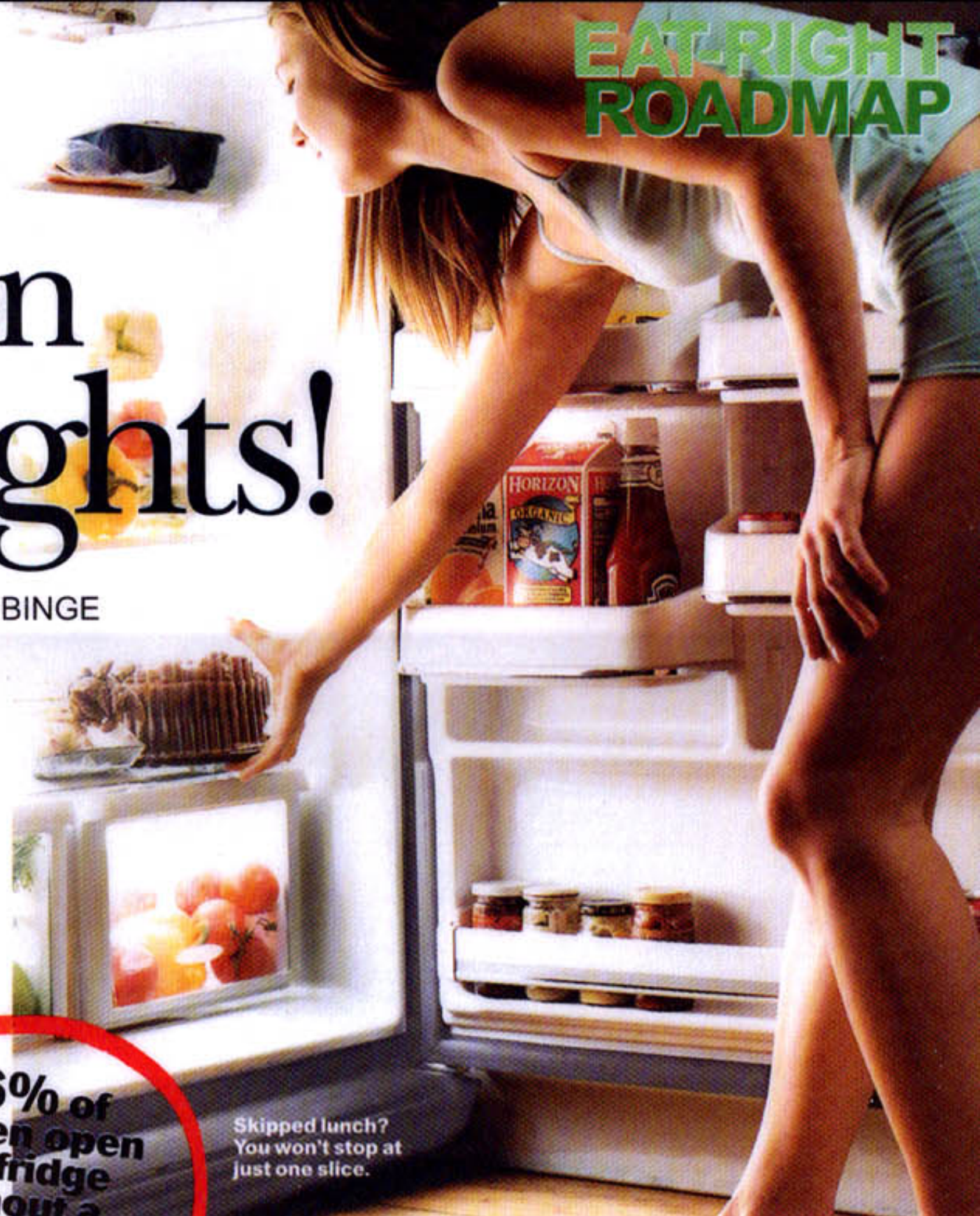
AND OTHER SURPRISING WAYS TO PREVENT A BINGE

YOU'RE HOME LATE, EXHAUSTED and drawn to those cookies on the counter. Before long, the entire box is history: another "just one" vow gone bad. How could this happen? "You binge when you don't make the mind-body connections that allow you to recognize you're satisfied," says Esther Blum, R.D., of New York City. We found seven ways to help you reconnect and bust the next binge before it begins.

SHINE ON Dieters who binge tend to keep the lights low when eating, says a study from the University of California at Irvine. The theory: Dim light allows you to divert attention from yourself and let go of inhibitions. Instead of dining in the dark, spotlight your snack. "Being in a situation that makes you feel onstage can help fight the urge to overeat," says study author Joseph Kasof, Ph.D.

FORGET LAST TIME Researchers in London found that among obese women receiving cognitive behavioral therapy, frequent bingers were usually least satisfied with their bodies. Had a cupcake (or three)? Don't beat yourself up. "Focus on what to do next: Brush your teeth, go for a walk," says Ann Kearney-Cooke, Ph.D., director of the Cincinnati Psychotherapy Institute.

TAKE A BREAK Before reaching for more, take ten to think about whether you even want it, says Ann Lombardo, a Weight Watchers group leader in New York City. "After a few minutes, most



36% of women open the fridge without a specific snack in mind, a Self.com poll found.

Skipped lunch? You won't stop at just one slice.

people decide they're done." **EAT LUNCH** "You binge when you've been depriving yourself," says Kasof. Don't "save"

calories for an evening event; eat regularly throughout the day, suggests Wahida Karmally, R.D., of New York City, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. A 130-pound woman needs at least 1,800 calories; that's about 400 for breakfast, 600 for lunch, 600 for dinner and two 100-calorie snacks.

KEEP IT TO THE KITCHEN You are less likely to munch mindlessly sitting at a table than on the couch, "where distractions, including the television, may interfere with fullness signals," says Blum.

DRINK WITH DINNER Having an alcoholic beverage on an empty stomach can cause blood sugar levels to drop. "You'll eat a lot in a short

time to get them back to normal," says Karmally. Have a drink with dinner (and sip water between cocktails to curb calories and quench thirst).

BITE IT, THEN WRITE IT "Record what and how much you ate and how you felt at the time" to figure out what triggers binges, says Karmally. Another blowout with your guy? You splurged last time, so...go directly to yoga class. Do not consume 200 cookies.

—Julie Meyer

★ We love this stuff!
EDITORS' PICKS **WHAT** BalanceLog by HealthTech
WHO Nicci Micco, nutrition editor
WHY "This fun food and activity log shows me how many cookies I've earned on my run!" (\$49; www.healthtech.com)



ERIC McNATT; STYLING, MONICA COTTO; PROP STYLING, SONIA NIKI; HAIR, SAM LEONARDI FOR ARTISTS FOR TIMOTHY PRIANO; MAKEUP, VERED FOR UTOPIA, DEVON JARVIS. SEE GO SHOPPING GUIDE.