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Timely Information for Personal Success

A Recession Might be Good...for Your Waistline

By **Tim Lencki**

Being an optimist, I always try to find the good in everything. So, what's good about a recession? Financially speaking, probably not much.

However, according to Christopher Ruhm, an economics professor at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, mortality actually *decreases* when the economy takes a turn for the worse. He suggests that a drop in body weight and an increase in physical activity, as well as a decline in smoking, are partially responsible. Now that's a positive in the midst of all the negative!

There are several explanations for this trend. One is TIME. People who are laid off have more time on their hands, time that can include developing a new habit — like exercise! The hardest part is getting started. Once you do, be consistent by exercising three days per week, and before you know it you will have developed a habit. In this way, once you do go back to work, you'll find the time to exercise because it just won't feel right if you don't.

Those who still have jobs but who don't need to work as many hours can also use the extra time to choose healthier activities.

Income may also play a role in this positive trend. With a decreased income, people tend to eat out less. In saving some money by not eating out, we can buy more unprocessed, high-quality

ingredients to make food at home and still come out ahead.

So take advantage of this recession — make use of your time by starting an exercise program. It can lift your mood, help you forget about your troubles (at least temporarily), and give you a healthier lifestyle to boot. Look at it this way — exercise is one part of your life that you DO have control over.

What's important is that you "move more" in everyday life. Exercise can take on many forms, and they're all good. You just need to try one of them. Make the choice to start exercising. I guarantee that you will feel a difference in just weeks. ❖

Tim Lencki is a strength and conditioning specialist, and author of "Fitness One Day at a Time." Visit his website at www.thefitnesseducator.com.

Even Simple Changes can Improve Health



When it comes to improving your health, the key to success is to take it "one day at a time." Even small changes over a period of time can help tremendously in improving your health and lifestyle.

Examine the following suggestions and begin implementing them one by one. Once you become consistent with one suggestion, go on to the next one.

- ☑ Add five more grams of fiber to your daily diet.
- ☑ Cut out refined carbohydrates, such as white bread, white rice, and sweets.
- ☑ Avoid foods with trans-fats (i.e. French fries, doughnuts and other baked goods, plus pie crusts, biscuits, pizza dough, cookies, crackers, stick margarines and shortening.

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Healthy Recipe: Tuna Salad Wraps

INGREDIENTS:

For the tuna salad:

- 3-ounce can tuna, drained
- 2 Tablespoons non-fat mayonnaise
- 1 Tablespoon each finely diced celery, and finely diced sweet onion

For the wrap:

- 1 large whole wheat flour tortilla
- 1 large lettuce leaf, shredded
- 1 large slice ripe tomato, sliced very thin

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Calories per serving: 327
- Carbohydrates: 31 g.
- Fat: 10 g.
- Protein: 25 g.
- Sodium: 643 mg.
- Fiber: 2 g.
- Saturated fat: 4 g.

DIRECTIONS:



For the wrap: Lay the tortilla out on a work surface and spread the tuna mixture in the center of the tortilla. Place the shredded lettuce on top of the mixture and top with a slice of tomato. Tightly roll the tortilla into a cylinder, ending with the seam side down. (The wrap can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.) Cut the wrap diagonally in half and serve. **Serving size:** 1 wrap.

1. *For the tuna salad:* In a mixing bowl, combine the tuna, mayonnaise, celery, and onion. 2.

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Even Simple Changes Can Improve Health

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- Add two more servings of veggies at lunch and dinner.
- Drink three more glasses of water each day.
- Add 10 minutes of walking to your daily exercise regimen. (Research shows that three 10-minute intervals of walking throughout the day can be effective for improving your cardiovascular health.)
- Take a break every hour at work, and walk 500 steps in place (2,000 steps burns 100 calories).

- Wake up 15 minutes earlier, and walk or bike before work.

Research shows that exercise and nutrition habits that last the longest are the ones taken slowly over time. Start implementing these ideas today! ❖

— Tim Lencki



Foods to Buy, Foods to Avoid

With all the busyness in our lives, it's easy to eat foods that are simple and quick to eat — but they're often unhealthy, too. Believe it or not, eating right can also be convenient. The following are some tips:

☺ *Produce & whole grains:* Look for colorful fruits and vegetables — berries, oranges, apples, yams, broccoli, spinach, and bell peppers, for starters. Cholesterol-free, low-fat fruits and veggies are the foundation of any healthy diet. Look for breads, pastas, and cereals made with whole grains. Check to make sure they're also low in fat and sugar.

☺ *Meat & beans, dairy & calcium:* Whatever the meat, read labels to make sure it's lean protein; 96% to 98% fat free. Black, soy, kidney, and garbanzo are protein-rich beans, too. Low fat-dairy products, yogurt, and cheese are good sources of calcium. For the lactose-intolerant, try fortified juices and cereals.

☺ *Omega 3 foods:* Salmon, tuna, halibut, herring, and mackerel are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids.

☹ *Unhealthy fats:* Read nutrition labels to check how many grams of fat, especially unhealthy trans fats that a given food item has. Avoid: high amounts of fats. Buy: Olive and safflower oils, and items low in fat.

☹ *Salt:* We all need some sodium, but most of us get far more than the recommended 2,300 to 2,400 mg. per day. Avoid high-salt soups and frozen foods. When in doubt, read labels.

☹ *Added sugar:* Sugars commonly added to foods include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, molasses, and others. Foods with one or more of these ingredients may be high in sugars. ❖

Source: www.WebMD.com.