Food and Fitness

New Year—New Beginnings

Everyone makes New Year's Resolutions—eat healthily, exercise more, get organized, don't procrastinate, etc. What if we took just 10 minutes a day to work toward any one of these goals.

Examples:

Eat healthily:

- Look through your cabinets for all the unhealthy foods you're trying to stop eating on a regular basis. Bag them up and give them to the grandchildren (that's who you bought them for, right?!) or take them to work for the break room.

Empty your cabinets of all the high calorie foods you can't stop eating.

- On your next grocery shopping trip buy raw vegetables that you enjoy in salads. When you get

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Guilt-free Food

Remember the good old days when you didn't agonize over every bite that went into your mouth? Doesn't that seem like a healthier attitude than all the constant worry?

No one says that you have to have a perfect diet all the time. Just weigh the op-

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Websites of interest:

- americaonthemove.org
- wvonthemove.net
- americanheart.org
- nhlbi.nih.gov

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Salt—Preserving Food or Destroying Life?

In the early days salting was an important method of food preservation. Now we have canning, refrigeration, freezing, drying, etc. to preserve food. Seems we've developed a taste for the little granules, however.

While salt is not essential for food preservation we've developed a fondness for the flavor.

In November 2007 the US Food and Drug Administration held an open hearing to review the status of salt in foods. At the hearing, claiming that excessive salt intake may be responsible for 100,000 deaths per year, Michael Jacobson, director of Center for Science in the Public Interest, urged the federal government to have manufacturers limit the amount of salt that could be added to packaged food.

Excessive salt intake is closely related to stroke, kidney disease and high blood pressure. According to the American Heart Association 65 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure. The salt that is added to packaged food accounts for 75% of our sodium intake. The average sodium intake is 3353 mg per day. The Institute of Medicine recommends much lower intake for older Americans—1300 mg for those 51-70 years of age and 1200 mg for those over 70 years of age and older.

Mary Hager of the American Dietetic Association testified that education rather than regulation should be the way to get consumers to lower sodium intake. She likened the sodium situation to that of trying to get the consumer to cut back on calorie intake and to increase physical activity. It's all a matter of choice.

So if you're inclined to choose a lower sodium intake try this menu:

Breakfast: 1 cup oatmeal, 8 oz. skim milk, banana

Snack: Fresh orange

Lunch: Grilled chicken salad with 3 oz. skinless chicken breast, 1 cup dark green leaf lettuce, 5 cherry tomatoes, 1/4 cup purple onion, 1/4 cup sliced mushrooms, 1/2 cup seedless grapes, 1 Tbs. oil and 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar, 5 whole wheat crackers

Snack: 8 oz fat free light fruit yogurt

Dinner: 3 oz. broiled fish, baked potato with 1 Tbs. sour cream, 1 cup fresh or frozen green beans, 1 cup frozen mixed berries.

The total sodium content of these meals and snacks = 750 mg. If you like you can measure out 1/8 teaspoon salt (half of the smallest spoon in your measuring spoon set) at the cost of 300 mg sodium to be used throughout the day. Your total will be 1050 mg. sodium for the day.

Guilt-free Food (continued)

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tions.

- Remember that fruit is a healthier option than cake, but it doesn't mean you can never have cake. Sometimes, like your birthday, okay!
- Remember that celery is a healthier dipper option than chips, but baked chips fill the bill nicely.
- A baked potato is a better option than fries, but fries occasionally won't kill you.
- Meat, fish, and chicken (all animal foods) have cholesterol, but leaner versions have less saturated fat. A bowl of pinto beans with corn bread (West Virginia favorites) make an excellent low saturated fat, low cholesterol dinner.

New Year, New Beginnings (continued)

home take 10 minutes to wash and prep and store them in zip lock bags. Now you can quickly have a fresh salad every day.

Exercise more:

- Take a 10 minute walk.
- Find a stairwell and go up as many steps as you can. Then come down and do it again. Do this for 10 minutes.

Stairway to fitness.

Get organized:

- Start with the worst corner of the worst room in your house or the worst file cabinet. Plan for 10 minutes a day. If you're having fun, keep going.
- Get rid of all you are not using or that is not sentimental.

Stop procrastinating:

- Get a small notebook and list the tasks you want to accomplish, whether at home or at work. Put the most challenging task at the top. Order by number in terms of time priority. Put a line through it when it's done. The list will grow but so will the accomplishments. Carry the notebook with you at all times.

The year 2008 will be your healthiest, most organized, most accomplished year of all!

Recipe Corner

You'll be watching football games and snacking. Try these healthier versions of your favorite snacks.

Buffalo Chicken Dip

2 10 oz. cans chunk chicken

2 8 oz. packages fat free cream cheese

1 cup light Ranch dressing

1.5 cups low fat cheddar cheese

1/4—1/2 cup Tabasco sauce, you decide

Combine all ingredients together in microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on medium heat to melt cheese and soften cream cheese. Stir until all ingredients are combined.

Serve with baked chips, sliced red and green peppers and celery sticks.

For party of 8 dip nutrition information per serving:

Calories 233, total fat 10 g, trans fat 0 g, saturated fat 3 g, cholesterol 43 mg, carbohydrate 8 g, dietary fiber 0 g, protein 27 g, sodium 1172 mg.

Queso Chili Dip

1 can Wolf Brand Chili

1 small jar (10 oz.) Chile con Queso Dip

8 oz. fat free cream cheese

Heat all ingredients together in microwave-safe bowl in microwave until melted.

Served with baked tortilla chips.

For party of 8 dip nutrition information per serving:

Calories 134, total fat 7 g, trans fat 0 g, saturated fat 3 g, cholesterol 19 mg, carbohydrate 8 g, dietary fiber 0 g, protein 9 g, sodium 727 mg.

Chocolate Plunge Fruit Dip

A good way to eat your fruit.

2/3 cup Karo Syrup

1/2 cup whipping cream

1 8-oz. package semi sweet morsels

Slices of fresh Apple, Banana, Orange, Kiwi, Peach, Pear

Mix corn syrup and cream in microwave-safe bowl. Heat on high to boiling point. Stir in chocolate morsels and allow to melt. Serve warm with fruit pieces for dippers. Serves 12.

Nutrition information per serving of chocolate sauce:

Calories 168, total fat 9 g, trans fat 0 g, saturated fat 6 g, cholesterol 14 mg, carbohydrate 23 g, dietary fiber 1 g, protein 2 g, sodium 19 mg.

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Follow Logan County's Lead

Two West Virginians from Logan County recently made national news (the Washington Post) for walking away pounds and cholesterol. Howard Wooten and Leonard Hovis were featured as being part of a group who used pedometers to track their steps. They improved their health by simply walking, along with several other friends.

Whether you use pedometers as Howard and Leonard did to track your steps walked, or just hit the trail with your friends, you will benefit by:

- Burning calories
- Making your insulin work harder to lower your blood sugar
- Improving the function of your heart and lungs
- Increasing your stamina
- Improving your immune system
- Improving your bone density

Walking—just do it! Anywhere. Any time.