



# Newsletter



Saturday, May 23, 2009

## TOBACCO CESSATION TIPS

Evaluate Your Stages of Change. . .

**Precontemplation Stage:** You really don't believe you need to change yet. **Contemplation Stage:** You know you need a change but haven't sought out the information or resources available to you. **Preparation Stage:** You know you need to change and are actively doing things to get ready to take action. **Action Stage:** You are using the resources available to you to keep your momentum going. **Maintenance Stage:** When you can truthfully answer to the fact that you have not used any tobacco products for six months!

## REDUCING BACK PAIN

Smoking can cause back pain because nicotine blocks blood flow to the muscles, including those in your back. Excess weight adds strain to every part of the body, including the vertebrae that make up the spine. It also makes sense that the more heavy lifting you do, the more prone you are to back injuries. Finally, depression may be linked to back pain because brain chemicals like serotonin and norepinephrine, which help regulate mood, also affect the way we perceive pain.

## STRAP ON A PEDOMETER

A recent study at Stanford University showed that people who used pedometers significantly increased their physical activity – and took more than 2,000 steps per day more than study participants who didn't use a pedometer. Further, the researchers noted two physical benefits as a result of wearing a pedometer – a decrease in the volunteers' BMI (body mass index) and their systolic blood pressure.

## HEALTH FACT

Diabetes cases in America have gone up 100 percent in the last seven years, and that is directly related to the increase in obesity in the American population. The best way to prevent the development of diabetes is to make healthy food choices and increase your level of physical activity.

## EXERCISE TIP

Wearing a helmet while bicycling can reduce the risk of brain injury by as much as 90 percent.

## WATERMELON BENEFITS

Watermelon consists of 92% water and 8% sugar, so it is aptly named. 1 cup of watermelon has 46 calories. Watermelon contains 15-20 milligrams of lycopene, an antioxidant that may help reduce the risk of cancer and other diseases, per two cup serving.

## NUTRITION TIP

Shop the perimeter of the grocery store, where fresh foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and fish are usually located. Avoid the center aisles where junk foods lurk.

## CALORIE FACT

The Coffee Toffee Twisted Frosty, Chocolate, at Wendy's has 550 calories and 21 g fat.

## WEIGHT LOSS TIP

In a new study, 64% of dieters said they watch fewer than 10 hours of TV a week. Americans typically watch 28 hours a week.

## HEALTHY RECIPE

### Chicken Pasta Salad (Makes 4 servings)

- \*2 cups cooked penne pasta
- \*1 cup quartered cherry tomatoes
- \*1 pkg. (4 oz.) crumbled Feta cheese
- \*1/2 cup Italian salad dressing & recipe mix for fat-free dressing
- \*1/3 cup fresh basil leaves, cut into strips
- \*1/4 cup chopped red onion
- \*1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes (not oil packed)
- \*2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, grilled or broiled, cut into 1/4 -inch slices

Toss all ingredients except chicken. Top pasta mixture with chicken. Serve warm or chilled. *Each serving has 290 calories, 9 g fat, and 4 g fiber.*

*Better Me* is an employee publication of Community Health Club of San Angelo