

Tough Financial Times Impact Health

By Dr. Robyn Conte

Americans are facing a grave economic climate these days, with the added pressure of picking the right politician to help pull us through these times.

Food prices have escalated, home prices have fallen, retirement plans are jeopardized and our jobs don't feel very secure. Whether or not we are directly impacted, the environment we are trying to live and work in has become very depressing, and in turn our health is suffering.

By taking some simple self-help steps we can not only get through this tough time, we can overcome it.

Excessive stress takes a toll on our health via headaches, high blood pressure, insomnia, anxiety, depression, panic, irritability, and stomach pains. Our personal relationships may become tense through arguments and worries over finances. Many people retreat from the big bad world through alcohol, medications/drugs, television, shopping or gambling and overeating. Unfortunately, these coping mechanisms often make our situation worse.

Visit your Naturopathic Doctor. Because you may be feeling overwhelmed and may not know where to start, seeing your physician is a great place to get back on track with your health. Your doctor should be your personal cheerleader, the one you turn to who helps you be your best.

Exercise as a family. Exercising together increases the amount of relaxed family time while reducing stress and tension at the same time. For parents with children under the age of 5, Dr. Conte suggests "parental exercise time" where Mom and Dad get an hour to themselves. One way to accomplish this is to pair up with another parent to provide each other a chance to exercise or decompress from their children.

Plan a vacation. Did you know that only 14 percent of employees take a vacation of two weeks or longer? And that Americans have the lowest amount of vacation time of any other country? According to a study performed by Families and Work Institute, more than half of American employees feel overwhelmed and overworked.

The good news is that many resorts have deeply discounted prices during these financial times. You may be able to score a very nice deal for a long weekend, or better yet for a full vacation. Camping in Arizona is an excellent way to rest and restore you in an affordable manner. Taking time for yourself helps you be a better employee, parent and spouse.

Be aware of what you put in your mouth. Alcohol and excessive sweets do not make things better. In fact, they can worsen your anxiety and stress. If you are in need of immediate relaxation, consider taking Kava Kava, chamomile, skullcap or peppermint tea. Acupuncture and bodywork can go a long way in helping you cope through these times and make you feel much better. Oatmeal is an excellent way to nourish the nervous system and help maintain blood sugar levels. Don't forget to drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Know the danger signs. If you are losing weight, have chronic insomnia, are feeling helpless or like hurting yourself or others, seek immediate help. Depression is a disease that can be treated.

Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic (RNMC) is a naturopathic family practice facility. RNMC was founded in 1991 as a primary care/family practice clinic with a mission to provide safe, sensible and effective natural medicine for the entire family. Dr. Thomas Kruzel and Dr. Robyn Conte are dedicated to educating and training the next generation of healthcare providers. For more information about RNMC, please visit www.rockwoodnaturalmedicine.com.

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If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Dr. Conte or Dr. Kruzel, please call Jeanne at (480) 767-7119 or e-mail her at RNMC9755@yahoo.com.