

New Year, New You: Staying Motivated for Your Health

The prospect of making New Year's resolutions can be daunting. You know from past experience how likely you are to break them. But, for many people, planning exactly how they'll put resolutions into action improves their odds for success. Try the following tips for some common resolutions to help you stay motivated all year long.



1 Drop Pounds, Permanently

A balanced diet can help you lose weight. Load up on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, lean meats, fish, beans, and nuts. Limit saturated fats, trans fats, sodium, and added sugars. After achieving a healthy weight, keeping off those pounds may pose a challenge. Eating breakfast every day and weighing yourself regularly can help keep you on track.

2 Be Smoke-Free, Forever

Quitting smoking cuts your risk for several types of cancer, heart attack, stroke, and infertility. But you'd better prepare for the most common withdrawal symptoms, such as irritability and anxiety. Anger and anxiety can linger for a few weeks; finding a replacement behavior can help. How about exercise? This quitting aid can brighten your mood and combat any resulting weight gain.



3 Stay in Motion

It's easy to keep that resolution to exercise when everything else in your life goes according to plan. But, how can you stay active when your child is sick, when it rains or snows, or when you go on vacation? Planning for such interruptions can help you stay focused and motivated during these times. For example, if the weather is bad, try a workout video, join a sports league, or get a head start on some strenuous spring cleaning, such as window washing. While you are on vacation, stay at a hotel with a pool or fitness center.

Sources include Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health.