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How to keep your fitness goals on track

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Start with a workout plan that's a good fit for *you*, expert says.

(HealthDay)—The New Year's resolutions many made to get fit have stalled by now. And one expert thinks that's because many people set their goals too high.

"The point isn't to become a marathoner in one exercise session or return to your high school athletic glory days all at once," Dr. Jamy Ard, co-director of the Weight Management Center at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, said in a center news release.

"The point is to get over the inertia that has taken root in your self-motivation world and remind yourself of why you value being active," he explained.

You'll improve your chances of success if you have a workout program

that's a good fit for you, Ard said.

"Physical activity not only needs to be simple and structured enough to meet your lifestyle demands, but also enjoyable enough for you to look forward to it," he added.

Ard offered some advice about how to start and maintain an exercise regimen. It begins with finding something you enjoy, whether it's going to the gym, starting a walking program or joining a running group.

You need to start slowly and have a simple plan. That could be a short stroll around the block or a 10-minute walk at work. Your plan should be so easy to do that it will be almost impossible for you to find excuses not to do it.

Keep challenging yourself by adding a little more to your fitness routine on a regular basis. If you're more active today than yesterday, you're moving in the right direction, Ard said.

"Seeing positive change can be extremely reinforcing, no matter how small. And maybe that will be enough to get you springing back sooner rather than later," he said.

More information: The U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute offers a guide to physical activity.

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