

The Medical Minute: Sticking with New Year's weight loss resolutions

21 January 2010, By Janelle D. McLeod

A few weeks into 2010, how are you doing with your New Year's resolutions?

It's that time of year again, when we look to bring about positive change in our lives through our annual New Year's resolutions. Many of these resolutions include starting an exercise program and creating healthier [eating habits](#). Ultimately, the goal is to lose weight, look great and feel even better. The hardest part about making these resolutions last is firmly committing to a lifetime of healthy practices.

If you need some help keeping on track with your resolutions, here are a few suggestions.

Write your goals down: This will help you to be more accountable in reaching that weight loss goal if you have it on paper and as something you can refer to each week as a reminder of your long-term goals. Food journals can be a useful tool to establishing a baseline for improvements that need to be made.

Set a target for the goals to be achieved: This will keep you on your toes towards reaching mini milestones throughout your journey.

Remove the tempting foods: Remove foods that are higher in calories, fat, sodium and sugar that could sabotage your success through "empty calories."

Stock your kitchen with healthy options: Be sure you have plenty of lean sources of protein, fresh fruits and [vegetables](#) with fiber, low-calorie snack bags and water.

Set mini goals: Make small changes throughout each week. This will help you stay focused on the bigger target and will make the changes feel more gradual so you can ease into them as opposed to changing everything overnight.

Form a team: By having a supportive network in place, it is more likely that the goals you set will be

achievable. Furthermore, supporters may be willing to assist you with reaching and attaining your goals because they can help motivate you and keep you dedicated to the ultimate goal.

Continue to document your progress throughout your journey: This helps identify problem areas and allows you to adjust your patterns as necessary.

Be realistic with your expectations: If you set the bar too high, you may have a difficult time reaching your goals. This mindset can help you to create new healthy habits which will eventually turn your "diet" into a truly healthy lifestyle to last a lifetime.

It's not too late to get back on track or re-establish your healthy goals for 2010. Be proud of yourself for beginning this journey towards a healthier you. Remember, there may be bumps in the road. Keep focused, stay positive and seek the guidance of your primary care physician or registered dietitian to keep you on track.

More information: To learn more about the Penn State Hershey Surgical Weight Loss Program visit www.pennstatehershey.org/web/surgicalweightloss/home

Provided by Pennsylvania State University

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