

Healthy New Year's Resolutions Made to Last

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Most of us tend to set the bar high when making New Year's resolutions. Often, we find ourselves consumed with the outcome rather than the process behind it. If we demand much of ourselves, we will achieve greater results in a short amount of time. Right? Wrong. Although there are good intentions behind those lofty goals, they tend to be attainable for only a few weeks rather than the long haul.



If you are in the dietetics profession, you are likely familiar with “SMART” goals. Even though we tend to associate these goals with work, incorporating them into our everyday lives is possible as well! This new year, follow these “SMART” goals to have a healthier 2016:

- 1. Be specific when making your goals.** Rather than saying “I want to eat healthier,” try something more definite, like, “I will eat two more vegetables and two more fruits a day,” “I want to decrease my consumption of red meat to one day a week,” or “I will replace two of my sugary sweetened beverages with water each day.”
- 2. Make sure your goals are measurable.** If weight loss is your goal, how much do you want to lose and when do you want to lose it by? Make sure that these goals are healthy and realistic. For instance, your goal could be losing one pound per week until your healthy weight is reached, and then maintaining this weight with healthy eating and exercise!
- 3. Action-oriented goals are necessary.** Winning a raffle would be an example of a non-action oriented achievement. Health, however, requires action. We cannot expect results without effort! Resisting the cravings and powering through physical activity will be well worth the end product. Instead of “I will become more knowledgeable in the area of _____,” map out the classes you will take, books you will read, and pod casts that you will listen to in order to achieve this goal.
- 4. Be realistic about your resolutions.** This tip is perhaps the most important of all. Most of us have set goals in the past that ended up making us feel overwhelmed and defeated. Instead of setting ourselves up for this failure, why not aim for something smaller and more attainable? You should set both short term and long term goals. We know ourselves and our tendencies better than anyone. We are all different in our capabilities. This year, think about what has worked for you and what hasn't. Form a health goal that is tailored to your personal wants and needs.

5. **Your goals should be time driven.** Keep in mind that *it takes approximately 21 days to form a habit*. Remember this when you consider slacking early in the game! Again, you should have short term goals building up to your end goal. For example, if your objective is to eat primarily vegetarian, you could start with one additional fruit and vegetable each day for a month, and then increase it to two for the next month, etc. The end of the year product would be something more ambiguous related to more fruit and vegetable consumption, such as: a clearer complexion, more energy, a healthier immune system, etc.

If you have already set goals, or if you haven't set any, don't worry, it's not too late! Adjust your already-existing goals to fit these criteria, or spend some time today pinpointing the things that you want to achieve! An easy way to eat healthier in the New Year is to add smoothies to your morning routine! Try this easy, yet delicious smoothie to kick off your day the right way!

Blueberry & Kale Smoothie

Recipe:

- 1/2 cup kale
- 1 & 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- 1 banana

- 2 tablespoons ground flax seed
- 1/2 cup blueberry Kefir
- 1/4 cup milk (regular, soy, or almond)

Instructions:

- Blend together until smooth, and enjoy!



Rachel Namey is currently a dietetic intern at Marshall University and plans to become a Registered Dietitian. As one of the nation's food and nutrition experts, she is committed to improving the health of her community. To find a registered dietitian in your area, visit www.eatright.org and click on "Find a Registered Dietitian."