

QuickTakes



When setting goals it's important to find ways to reward yourself for the little victories along the way. Here are a few ideas:

- Eat a small piece of the best chocolate imaginable
- Take a Saturday morning and go out for breakfast with a friend.
- Put \$5 in an envelope each time you reach a mini-goal and buy something really special once you achieve your larger goal.

New Year's Resolution?

New Year's Resolution?

The New Year is a time of reflection and planning for the coming months. It's a time when many Americans resolve to make a significant lifestyle change. In a country where approximately two-thirds of the population is either overweight or obese, it's not surprising that our most common New Year's resolution is to lose weight.

When you start a new weight-loss plan, you need to go step-by-step. Don't overwhelm yourself with too much information or high expectations. If you want to keep the weight off for good then this is a long-term commitment.

Below are five things you can do right now that can help you to be successful. You can do this!

Step One: Set Your Goal

One of the keys when making any change is to have a clear goal.

Long-term goal: What's your ideal goal weight? Establish a healthy, achievable and sustainable weight-loss goal and write it down.

Short-term goal: Now look at the next six weeks and decide on a realistic starting point. A good short-term goal would be to lose five pounds through the first six weeks. Remember, it's important that your short-term goal be achievable!

Step Two: Learn the Basics on Calories

Many diet plans have complicated formulas and ratios. But the basics of weight loss are simple:

Consume less, burn more: To lose weight, you need to burn more calories than you consume. Set a plan that will help you be satisfied on fewer calories, while encouraging you to stay active and burn more calories.

Step Three: Choose Your Foods Wisely!

Learn portion control: Identify any foods that you're more likely to overeat. Common problem foods include: ice cream, cakes, cookies, full-fat cheese, pizza and red meat. Cut back on these

first. Read labels carefully and watch how much goes on your plate. Remember these tips to help visualize your portions:

- 1 cup is about the size of a baseball.
- 1/2 cup is close to the size of a computer mouse.
- A 3-ounce portion of chicken, fish or meat is about the size of a deck of cards.

Feel full on fewer calories! If you fill your plate with lean protein-rich foods, plus plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, you'll feel more satisfied. Soups are a great example of a food that can fill you up on fewer calories. "Several studies show that soup eaters end up weighing less than non-soup eaters," says Penn State nutrition professor Barbara Rolls, Ph.D.

Step Four: Make a Plan to Exercise

Make it easy: To make your plan work you have to get moving! Identify at least three exercises you can do easily and conveniently.

Schedule it: Get specific about exactly when you will add activity. Decide now, write it in your calendar or planner and stick to it.

Step Five: Get Support

You're much more likely to keep to this plan if the people around you are supporting it.

Talk about it! Speak with your friends and family and let them know about your goals. See if they'll agree to help by giving you positive encouragement along the way.

Make a Plan to Exercise

If you're thinking about starting a fitness program, don't set yourself up for failure! If you dread it, you won't do it. How is it that we say we've have no time to exercise, yet we've seen every episode of The Simpsons since it began? The truth is, we choose not to spend some of our free time exercising. The psychology is simple: We make time for what we enjoy, and we put off—or avoid entirely—what we don't.

The key is finding ways to make exercise less of a chore and more of a choice, says James Annesi, Ph.D., exercise psychologist and director of wellness for the Metro Atlanta YMCA. Try these simple strategies, he says, and you may find yourself skipping — OK, taping — Grey's Anatomy episodes to avoid missing workouts.

- **Make it fun.** If you don't love exercise, try to bring things you do love into the exercise experience. Watch TV, listen to music, or chat with a friend during your workout. By taking the focus off your effort and placing it on the more entertaining, social aspects of the activity, you'll be more likely to stick with it.
- **Make it convenient.** If you want exercise to become a habit, make it fit easily into your schedule. New research shows that a few short exercise sessions a day are as valuable as one extended session.
- **Be realistic.** Expect at least a couple of weeks to go by before you start to notice any changes in your body. Start slowly and carefully, pick an exercise "dosage" you can manage without

pain, boredom or injury, and relish the changes you see occurring over time.

- **Set reasonable goals.** Instead of focusing on one large goal, set smaller incremental goals - you'll feel a sense of achievement more frequently. Establish goals that are more process-oriented than results-oriented. For example, completing three 20-minute walks per week is a quickly rewarding, observable goal; a long-term result, such as losing 30 pounds, may seem too distant to offer much immediate inspiration.
- **Be flexible.** With work and family life tugging at you, it's easy to get bumped from your exercise routine. Don't toss up your hands as if all progress has been lost when this happens, cautions Annesi. Anticipate some unexpected interruptions will crop up (such as increased business travel or child-care responsibilities), and simply bend your routine to compensate. For example, if you normally schedule three weekly workouts and events get in the way, try the more flexible schedule of 12 times per month. That way, if you have a hectic week or two, you still have two weeks to meet your overall goal.
- **Find the right activity.** Experiment. Try different activities to see which you like best. As you explore, ask yourself three simple questions: Do I look forward to this? Do I enjoy doing it? Do I feel good afterward? If you honestly answer yes to all three questions, it's an activity you'll probably keep doing.

Wilted Spinach Salad

Makes: 4 servings | 15 minutes

(Photo Source: ©Ellen Silverman/Matria Healthcare)

Ingredients:

- 2 large navel oranges
- 1 bag (10 ounces) fresh baby spinach leaves, washed and dried
- 1 green onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons orange marmalade
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped toasted pecans, optional

Preparation:

1. Remove orange peel (including white pith) with a serrated knife. Working over a salad bowl to catch the juice, cut the orange segments from the membranes. Squeeze any juice from the membranes into the bowl as well. Add spinach leaves and sliced green onion to the bowl.
2. In a saucepan, heat marmalade, vinegar, oil, salt and pepper. over medium-low heat just to a simmer. Pour over the salad and toss quickly. Sprinkle with pecans, if using. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts: (PER SERVING) 118 Calories, 2.6g Fat, 0.4g Saturated fat, 0g Trans fat, 3.0g Protein, 23g Carbohydrate, 4.0g Fiber, 319mg Sodium



TIP

Spinach and oranges combine to make this a nutrition gold mine: the salad is an excellent source of beta carotene, vitamin C, potassium, iron and magnesium.