



IN  
GOOD

# HEALTH NEWSLETTER... January



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## JANUARY:

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## S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

Goal setting is a process of determining what your goals are, working towards them and assessing whether your goals are met. A prevalent process for setting goals uses the SMART acronym, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

**S = Specific**

**M = Measurable**

**A = Attainable/Achievable**

**R = Realistic**

**T = Time Bound**

### Specific

A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. An example of a general goal would be, "Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables." But a specific goal would say, "Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day."

### Measurable

Choose a goal with measurable progress, so you can see the change as it occurs. A measurable goal has an outcome that can be assessed either on a sliding scale (1-10), or as a hit or miss, success or failure. Based on our example, "Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day" would be a measurable goal because you are measuring if you consumed fruits and vegetables one meal per day.

### Attainable/Achievable

An achievable goal has an outcome that is realistic given your current social, economic, or cultural resources and time available. Goal achievement may be more of a "stretch" if the outcome is difficult to begin with. Our example of a goal was to "Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day." Is consuming a serving of fruits and vegetables one meal a day possible for you? If not, then this would not be an attainable goal.

### Realistic

Start small; with what you can and will do and experience the joys of meeting that goal. Gradually increase the intensity of the goal after evaluating the goal. In the example goal "Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day" realistic for your food budget? If not, then you might want to redefine the goal.

### Time Bound

Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by six months. Setting an end point for the goal gives you a clear target to achieve. Remember that accountability is an essential component to setting smart goals. Share your goals with someone you trust to help hold you to your desired outcomes.

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## New Year's Resolutions (That Are a Bad Idea)

**Did you know?** It's more sensible to set "small, attainable goals throughout the year, rather than a singular, overwhelming goal," [according](#) to psychologist Lynn Bufka. "Remember, it is not the extent of the change that matters, but rather the act of recognizing that lifestyle change is important and working toward it, one step at a time," Bufka



**Resolving to Eliminate Carbs or Fats** Some of today's popular diet trends instruct you to eliminate carbohydrates or fats from your diet. Fitness expert Ashley Yandle doesn't recommend taking it to this extreme. "We need carbohydrates, protein and healthy fats to build a lean and healthy body," she says. "By eliminating carbohydrates, you can starve your body of energy it needs to function." Instead of cutting carbs out altogether, incorporate healthy ones like sweet potatoes, oatmeal, quinoa, brown rice and low-sodium rice cakes to fuel your body and build muscle. The same goes with fats. Don't cut fats out of your diet; instead, choose foods with healthy fats like olive oil, avocados and nuts to help you feel satisfied and full.

### **Resolutions to Join a Gym (If You Hate the Gym)**

Some New Year's goal-setters may think that just belonging to a gym will inspire them to workout constantly, even if they hate the gym. However, Michelle Babb, nutritionist and owner of Eat.Play.Be. warns that a consistent exercise schedule can be difficult enough without trying to drag yourself to the gym if you just don't like being there. "Find some type of physical activity that helps you feel strong and confident in your body," says Babb. "You'll be much more likely to exercise regularly." Recall activities you've enjoyed in the past and focus on those. Go ice skating, bicycling, roller blading, hiking or take a dance or swim class.

**Fixating on a Number on the Scale** Don't get caught up in the numbers game. Setting your sights on a do-or-die weight can create problems. Not only do you risk feeling discouraged if you don't hit your ideal weight as quickly as you'd like, but if you've also started an exercise program, you're likely losing fat and gaining muscle at the same time. Instead of focusing on reaching that magic number, create resolutions that center around inches lost or fitting into a certain (realistic) size of jeans or dress.

**Vague Resolutions to "Be Better"** Becoming "better" is a resolution that sounds great in theory but can set you up for failure. Betsy Sobiech, personal growth and development expert and founding partner of Tiara International, LLC, warns goal makers to be careful of the "er" trap. "Get healthier. Be better. Work harder. These are potential traps because they can never be accomplished," she says. "You won't know when you have accomplished enough or have reached your milestone." Instead, craft a goal that will clearly demonstrate that this area of life is important. For example, you could replace a resolution such as, "be a better friend" with "send handmade birthday cards" or "plan that girls' weekend away."

**Resolving to Get Everything Organized** Sounds good on the surface: Organization is a positive attribute after all. But this goal is vague and vast. Committing to organizing your entire life is pretty ambitious. "Consider the continuum of your life," says Jean Costa-McCutcheon, psychotherapist, life coach and owner of Potentia Counseling and Coaching. "Think about how you might make smaller, more 'chunked down' changes." Instead of a blanket commitment to organizing all aspects of your life, decide that you'll clean one cabinet at home or one desk drawer at work a week. The trick is to make the goal specific and achievable enough that you don't get discouraged and give up altogether.

**Setting an Unrealistic Deadline for Weight-Loss Goals** Date-specific resolutions may seem less vague, but focusing on an unrealistic end date for reaching a perfect weight could put stress and pressure on you and backfire if you don't meet your goal by that day. Instead, consider revising your goal to focus on sustainable behaviors that will help you lose weight and get healthy. Examples of these types of goals are aiming to work out at least three times a week or increasing the number of servings of fruits and vegetables in your diet by three each day. Look at the big picture and cut it down into small resolutions that support the end goal.



## Bad New Year Resolutions



### **Committing to Training Goals Beyond Your Current Abilities**

When it comes to setting training goals for yourself, consider your current physical condition, says personal trainer, nutrition coach and owner of MissFIT, Kayla Pevehouse. For example, if you can barely walk a mile, don't resolve to run a marathon. Start small and work your way up to more lofty goals. For the non-runner who wants to start running, Pevehouse recommends a "couch to 5k" program, and then progressing from there. "If you jump right into an intense training program without the proper conditioning beforehand, you are not only setting yourself up for failure on your resolution but also potentially for a major

**Going on a Trendy Crash Diet** The grapefruit diet, the raw food diet and any other one-ingredient diet are all unhealthy trends that involve eating an abundance of the same type of food. Not only do you run the risk of getting bored with this approach, but you'll also miss out on a number of nutrients you get from a well-rounded diet. Personal trainer Kayla Pevehouse recommends thinking of food as fuel. Rather than eating massive amounts of "magic" diet foods, learn to understand the foods and portions that will help you reach your specific health goals. "Resolve to eat a well-balanced, whole-foods-based diet and add color to your meals," says Pevehouse. "Mix it up instead of eating the same things all the time. Avoid processed foods and sugars but don't avoid

**Resolving to Get a New Job** Resolutions that are absolute and lack focus won't set you up for success. Obtaining a new job is a great goal, but this goal is out of your hands to some degree. Sure, you can apply and interview all that you want, but it doesn't guarantee you'll be hired. The job market fluctuates as does the timing of hiring surges. Putting pressure on yourself to get a new job -- or else -- with no milestones or plan can be overwhelming. Set more manageable, realistic goals. Jean Costa-McCutcheon, professional psychotherapist and life coach, suggests setting a more attainable goal such as networking with one new person or exploring one new career path each week.

**Recycling Old Resolutions** Perhaps you have a list of unchecked goals from last year. Be cautious about recycling those for this year. Personal growth expert Betsy Sobiech encourages people to ask themselves if it's really going to happen or if you're setting yourself up for failure again. This is even more significant if the goal has made the list for several years in a row. Sobiech says you might want to consider giving yourself a break and focusing on something else instead. "If you really want this to be the year, make sure you have done the internal work on your motivation and mindset to truly go for it," she says. "Also, put in place the outside support you need to get started right away."

**Negative Resolutions** Stop drinking coffee. Don't watch television. Avoid eating desserts. Sometimes it's all in the wording. Positioning your resolution negatively can make it harder to achieve. "It's ineffective to word a resolution negatively," says personal growth expert Betsy Sobiech. "It's a self-punishing way to word our goals." When you word your goals negatively, you're focusing all of your attention and energy on the activity you are trying to avoid, which doesn't provide direction or motivation. Instead, Sobiech recommends crafting positive goals such as, "Be healthy enough to run a 5K," or "Start each day with a glass of water." This focuses your attention on moving forward.

**Create Resolutions That Work** Setting goals that improve your mind, body and soul can be empowering. The key is to set attainable goals so you don't set yourself up for failure and end up beating yourself up if you don't achieve them. "Small changes done successfully over time can produce more significant positive change than starting something big and not being able to keep it up or maintain it over time," says psychotherapist Jean Costa-McCutcheon. Think in terms of what you want, not what you don't want.



## Tips to Get Motivated to Workout



**Struggling to find motivation to get back on your exercise regimen? When it comes to working out, many of us find it difficult to find motivation. Motivation is fuel. It drives us when it comes to starting and maintaining a fitness regimen.**

### 1. Visualize

Sport psychologists talk about visualization all the time, and athletes around the world use this technique for performance enhancement. The night before your workout, take 10 minutes to visualize your entire session in your mind. Imagine yourself getting up, working out (really go through the entire workout in your mind) and feeling energized and accomplished afterwards.

### 2. Have Fun

When it comes to exercise, people often underestimate the power of having fun. In fact, a recent study reveals that if you're not having fun and perceive your workout as work, you're more inclined to snack. Try dance classes or pick up a sport you used to love or have always wanted to try. Enjoying your workout improves the likelihood that you will be motivated for the long run.

### 3. Shop

It may be surprising to learn that taking a trip to the mall could have beneficial effects on your fitness motivation. A researcher coined the term "enclothed cognition," which essentially means that what you wear affects your performance. Study results show that you'll perform better at a given task if you dress suitably for the task at hand. For example, dressing like a personal trainer or a professional cyclist (depending on what activity you choose) has the potential to greatly improve your exercise performance.

### 4. Focus on Strengths

It's important that you remain positive. Reframe negative thoughts (e.g., I'm not going to make it through this workout) to more positive thoughts (e.g., I've gotten through workouts before, and I always feel better after).

### 5. Reward Yourself

Positive reinforcement can be an incredibly effective way to keep yourself on track. Frequent rewards throughout the process are well-deserved when starting and maintaining a fitness routine. Give yourself rewards daily or weekly: Take a trip to the spa, use the steam room or get a massage to unwind. Short-term and long-term rewards are necessary. Plan a celebration one to three months in advance at which you can show off your results.

### 6. Be Consistent

We know from research that "feel good" chemicals such as dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin are released in the brain when you exercise. But when you exercise consistently, new dopamine receptors are created in the motivation center of the brain. Exercising becomes a self-reinforcing behavior!

[livestrong.com](http://livestrong.com)



# Handy Portion Control

Eating an appropriate amount of food is as easy as looking at your hands! Use this guide to help keep your portions under control!

Hand Symbol	Equivalent	Foods	Calories
	<b>Fist</b> 1 cup	Rice, pasta Fruit Veggies	200 75 40
	<b>Palm</b> 3 ounces	Meat Fish Poultry	160 160 160
	<b>Handful</b> 1 ounce	Nuts Raisins	170 85
	<b>2 Handfuls</b> 1 ounce	Chips Popcorn Pretzels	150 120 100
	<b>Thumb</b> 1 ounce	Peanut butter Hard cheese	170 100
	<b>Thumb tip</b> 1 teaspoon	Cooking oil Mayonnaise, butter Sugar	40 35 15



## Pineapple & Cucumber Guacamole

### INGREDIENTS (8)

- 1 1/4 cups peeled and small-dice English cucumber
- 1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 medium jalapeño peppers or serrano chiles, stemmed and minced
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice (from about 2 medium limes), plus more as needed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more as needed
- 1 1/4 pounds ripe avocados (about 3 medium)
- 1 1/2 cups small-dice fresh pineapple
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

Makes about 4 1/2 cups

### SUMMARY

Dicing the avocados, cucumber, and pineapple gives this guacamole a chunkier salsalike texture rather than the standard smashed or smooth style. The cucumber and pineapple lighten the mixture and add fresh, sweet, and acidic flavors. **What to buy:** Look for avocados that give slightly when pressed but are not completely soft.



[chowhound.com](http://chowhound.com)