



New Year's Resolution Calendar

At the stroke of midnight on December 31, millions of Americans will resolve to start eating better and/or lose those extra pounds they are carrying around. But within a few days or weeks, most will have given up. This year, take a systematic approach to those nutrition-related resolutions. Instead of resolving to “eat better and lose weight,” set one resolution for each month throughout the year. This can improve the chance that your resolutions are kept and they turn into healthy habits.

January

Reduced your intake of artery-clogging saturated fat by switching from whole milk and dairy products to low-fat or nonfat milk and dairy products. This includes sour cream, yogurt, cheeses, and canned milks as well as milk.

February

Increase your intake of fruits to 2-3 servings a day. Make it as easy to reach for a piece of fruit as it is to reach for a cookie by keeping a bowl of fresh fruit on the kitchen counter. Use canned or dried fruits for snacks on the go. Eat vitamin C-rich fruit like oranges, strawberries, or kiwi every day.

March

Increase your intake of vegetables to 3-5 servings a day. Three to four times a week, choose dark green, deep yellow and orange vegetables such as romaine lettuce, spinach, broccoli, sweet potatoes, and carrots.

April

Instead of high-fat, high-sugar snacks, choose foods like whole grain crackers, low-fat popcorn, pretzels, rice cakes, popcorn cakes, and graham crackers. Of course, fruits and veggies are excellent choices as well.

May

Reduce your intake of saturated fat and cholesterol by eating at least 1 meatless meal each week. Plan menus that include pasta dishes, beans, whole grain breads, and a variety of fruits and veggies. Baked potatoes are easy to make and can function as the entrée. Vegetarian chili is another option.

June

Limit your intake of sodium. Choose “low salt” or “no salt added” versions of foods such as crackers, nuts, canned vegetables, soups, and soy sauce. Use less salt in cooking, and don't add salt to food at the table.

July

Reduce your intake of fat by limiting fried foods to once a week or less. This includes fried meats, French fries, fried cheese, chips, grilled sandwiches, cheese curls, and fried vegetables.

August

Boost your fiber intake by starting the day with a bowl of high fiber cereal. Look for cereals that have at least 4 grams of fiber per serving. Increasing your intake of fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains will also help increase your fiber intake.

September

Reduce your risk of osteoporosis by including good sources of calcium in your diet. Low-fat or nonfat milk or yogurt are the best sources of calcium. However, foods like leafy green vegetables, figs, beans, salmon, and sardines with the bones are good sources as well.

October

Eat fish at least twice a week. Fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, trout, sardines, and herring contain omega-3 fatty acids which appear to reduce the risk of heart disease.

November

As the holiday season approaches, begin practicing low-fat cooking techniques. Look for ways to modify your favorite recipes to lower the fat and calorie content. Attend healthy cooking classes that may be offered at hospitals in your area.

December

The holiday season is upon you. Try to maintain your weight by sticking to a consistent exercise schedule and limiting high calorie foods. As you look back over this year, you will have now developed 12 new healthy eating habits to make you healthier for many years to come.

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