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The Wellness Exchange

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Make This Your Year for Better Health!



Reach Your Goals!

Use these three tips for success!

1. Have a plan and follow it to maintain your confidence!
2. Don't be afraid to ask for help from friends, family, or your healthcare provider.
3. Expect obstacles to come up - that way you'll be prepared to overcome them!

Happy New Year! With every New Year comes the task of making New Year's resolutions, with the hope that this year will be more healthy, more fulfilling, more relaxing, just better all around. The following are ideas for some healthy resolutions that are sure to have you feeling your best!

Eat healthier:

Make small, gradual changes to your diet, so that you don't overwhelm yourself with a total overnight reformation. Try adding a few servings of fruits and vegetables every day,

choosing low-fat and non-fat dairy foods, or replacing a healthy sandwich for a fatty fast-food menu item. And don't forget to drink plenty of water to keep yourself feeling hydrated and energized!

Relax:

Sit calmly and quietly for a few minutes every day - just close your eyes and breathe deeply. Take the time to read or listen to music, go for a walk, or have fun with your family and friends. And make sure to get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night to boost your stress defense.

Kick your bad habits:

You know what areas of your life need work. And if you slip, don't worry, just recommit to your goals. Change is a life-long process.

New Year's Resolution No-No's



Do you see New Year's Eve as a great time to make

resolutions you will inevitably break? You're not alone. Here are five reasons why we don't keep our resolutions past February:

Reality Check: Unrealistic goals can be a real barrier to making changes in your life. It's important to consider moderation, and to make sure your resolutions are for *you and only you*. If you don't make them for yourself, you won't stick to them.

No plan: Not planning your resolutions until 11:30 p.m. on December 31st, or making resolutions based on how you feel at the moment, are surefire ways to prevent yourself from sticking to your New Year's resolutions. It's very

important to make a plan, and think about what obstacles might come up to block you from achieving your goals, so that you can determine *in advance* what changes you will need to make.

Keep it simple: Too often, people overwhelm themselves by taking on several big life changes at the same time. Choose only a couple of goals that will introduce small, positive changes, rather than trying to do it all at once. The success you feel when you stick to those small changes will lead you to make more positive changes in the future.

The Words "More" or "Less": More healthy, less weight? What does this mean in real terms? In the quest for success, it's important to quantify goals and set deadlines. If your goal is to feel healthier, write a list specific steps or tasks that you can take to get there (attend weekly fitness classes, add two servings of fruits and

vegetables every day, lose 5 pounds by February, get monthly massages) and move forward from there.

If at first you don't succeed: This statement is so true, yet we often don't allow ourselves the opportunity to "try, try again." If you miss your workout, or indulge that chocolate craving, it doesn't mean you have to give up on your commitment. Persistence is crucial. Think about any barriers that impeded your progress, and figure out a plan to overcome those barriers on your next try.

The key to a successful resolution is that you stay realistic, take small, manageable steps, celebrate your successes, and allow yourself room to slide backwards. When you make your resolutions fit your own lifestyle, you are already on the road to success!





Improving Your Quality of Sleep

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com

Are you one of the many people who have a hard time falling asleep and staying asleep? Here are some tips to help you achieve and maintain better sleep.

Maintain regular bed and wake time schedules, even on weekends. A regular waking time in the morning helps our internal clock know when to fall asleep at night.

Establish a relaxing bedtime routine

such as soaking in a hot bath, reading a book or listening to soothing music. This helps separate your sleep time from other activities that can cause excitement, stress or anxiety. Avoid activities like working, paying bills, engaging in competitive games or family problem-solving before bed, which can make it more difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.



Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive – you can expect most quality mattresses to last about 9 or 10 years. In addition, use comfortable pillows, and make sure your room is free of clutter that might cause you to trip and fall if you have to get up in the middle of the night.

Create an environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable, cool, and free of interruptions. Consider using blackout curtains, eye shades, ear plugs, “white noise machines,” humidifiers, fans and other devices.

Use your bedroom only for bedroom activities. Take work materials, computers and televisions out of the bedroom. This will strengthen the association between bed and sleep. And

if you experience anxiety around a certain activity or item, remove it from your bedtime routine. For example, if looking at a bedroom clock makes you anxious about how much time you have before you must get up, move the clock out of sight.

Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your bedtime. Eating or drinking too much may make you less comfortable when settling down for bed. In addition, spicy foods may cause heartburn, leading to difficulty falling asleep and discomfort during the night. Try to restrict fluids close to bedtime as well, to prevent nighttime trips to the bathroom.

Exercise regularly, but be sure to finish your workout at least 2-3 hours before bedtime. Regular exercise makes it easier to fall asleep and

contributes to sounder sleep, but exercising right before going to bed makes falling asleep more difficult, because exercise causes our body temperature to rise, and a cooler body temperature is associated with sleep onset. Because it can take several hours for our body temperature to drop, late afternoon or early evening exercise is the perfect way to help you fall asleep at night.

Avoid caffeine close to bedtime, as it can keep you awake. Caffeine is a stimulant, which produces an alerting effect on your body. Caffeine products, such as coffee, tea, soda and chocolate, remain in the body for 3-5 hours, but can affect some people for up to 12 hours.



Avoid nicotine (e.g. cigarettes, tobacco products), which can cause difficulty falling asleep, problems waking in the morning, and may even cause

Do You Snore, or Does Someone You Know?

Snoring is often treated successfully by making lifestyle changes, which include:

1. Losing weight. Many people who snore are overweight. Weight loss can help reduce the narrowing of the airway and possibly reduce or eliminate snoring.

2. Limiting the use of alcohol and medications. Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol or taking certain medications before sleep may worsen snoring.

3. Getting plenty of sleep. Snoring may be more frequent when you have not had enough sleep.

4. Sleeping on your side. Sleeping on your side may eliminate snoring. Try sewing a pocket in the middle of the back of your pajama top, putting a tennis ball into the pocket, and stitching it closed. This will help keep you from sleeping on your back.

5. Using nasal strips. Nasal strips, such as Breathe Right, widen the nostrils and improve airflow. If snoring continues despite these treatments, consult your doctor for other alternatives.

nightmares. Nicotine is also a stimulant, and smoking before bed makes it more difficult to fall asleep. When smokers do go to sleep, they experience nicotine withdrawal symptoms, which also affect sleep quality. It's also very important to remember never to smoke in bed or while you're sleepy!

Avoid alcohol close to bedtime. Consuming alcohol leads to a night of less restful sleep. Although many people think of alcohol as a sedative, it actually disrupts sleep and causes nighttime awakenings.

Try these tips if you have trouble sleeping, but if problems continue, discuss your sleep difficulties with your doctor. Your doctor will help treat the problem or may refer you to a sleep specialist.