

Lifewire: Behind every real resolution is a plan to get it done

by Ven_Griva

New Year's Day is fast approaching, a time when many Americans resolve to improve their lives. An online poll found at www.usa.gov reveals that of the top 10 resolutions people make for the new year, six of them are health-related.

Not surprisingly, the most popular resolution among Americans is to lose weight. The remaining top 10 health-related resolutions found by the poll are: No. 5, get fit; No. 6, eat right; No. 8, drink less alcohol; No. 9, stop smoking; and No. 10, reduce stress.

These are all noble goals. The trouble with resolutions, however, is that our resolve to keep them often melts faster than snow after a white Christmas.

The folks at www.goals.com believe that a resolution without a plan is just another way of making a wish. Without mapping out the steps it will take to attain your goal, a resolution will be of little value.

There is a right way and a wrong way to make a New Year's resolution, they say. Here are a few expert tips from goals.com to see that your resolution to improve your health comes to pass:

1. In order for your personal health resolution to have "resolve," it must translate into clear steps that you can put into action. A good plan will tell you what to do next, and what steps are required to meet your goal.

2. Don't wait: If you're like most of us, you'll have a limited window of opportunity during the first few days of January to harness your motivation. After that, most folks forget their resolutions completely. Consequently, you must start creating your plan right away.

3. Write it down: Commit your resolution and plan to writing someplace, such as a notebook or journal. And track your progress.

4. Think year round: Resolutions are set in one day but accomplished over time with hundreds of tiny steps. New Year's resolutions should be considered no more than a starting point.

5. Remain flexible: Don't be discouraged when circumstances change your plans or you fail to meet your

goals on schedule. Flexibility is required to complete any but the simplest projects. Sometimes the goal itself will even change. Most of all, recognize partial successes at every step along the way. It is important to congratulate yourself for the progress you make.

BERRY GOOD

Most of us can remember our mothers telling us to eat our fruits and vegetables because they are good for us. Whether you recall that refrain as loving advice or more of an incessant nag, science is proving Mom's words to be true.

At the sixth annual International Conference on Frontiers for Cancer Prevention Research, held in Philadelphia Dec. 5-8, eating right took center stage.

Researchers from Ohio State University reported findings from a study that investigated whether eating blackberries had a positive effect on patients with Barrett's esophagus, a precancerous gastroesophageal condition associated with acid reflux disease.

Ohio State researchers found that patients diagnosed with Barrett's esophagus have a 30- to 40-fold risk of developing esophageal adenocarcinoma, or EAC, the fastest-growing cancer in the United States.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, EAC will claim the lives of 15,000 Americans in 2007 alone. It has a survival rate of only about 15 percent.

"In addition to gastroesophageal reflux disease, increasing body mass index, or body fatness, is strongly associated with EAC development. Whereas plant-based diets and particularly increased fruit consumption have been associated with decreased risk for EAC," said Ohio State assistant professor Laura A. Kresty.

In the Ohio State study, participants consumed roughly 1 ounce to 1.5 ounces of black raspberries per day for 26 weeks. Tests administered before and during the study showed that study participants reduced the cancer-causing EAC agents in their bodies by more than 50 percent, and increased the expression of a naturally occurring human enzyme that fights cancer.

E-mail Ven Griva or write to P.O. Box 120190, San Diego, CA 92112.

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