Chances are at some time in your life you’ve made a New Year’s resolution — and then broken it. This year, stop the cycle of resolving to make change and then not following through. Here are 10 tips to help you get started.

1. Be Realistic
The surest way to fall short of your goal is to make your goal unattainable. For instance, resolving to NEVER eat your favorite food again is setting you up to fail. Instead, strive for a goal that is attainable, such as avoiding it more often than you do now.

2. Plan Ahead
Don’t make your resolution on New Year’s Eve. If you wait until the last minute, it will be based on your mindset that particular day. Instead, it should be planned well before December 31 arrives.

3. Outline Your Plan
Decide how you will deal with the temptation to skip that exercise class or have that piece of cake. This could include calling on a friend for help, practicing positive thinking and self-talk, or reminding yourself how your action will affect your goal.

4. Make a “Pros” and “Cons” List
It may help to see a list of items on paper to keep your motivation strong. Develop this list over time, and ask others to contribute to it. Keep your list with you and refer to it when you need help keeping your resolve.

5. Talk About It
Don’t keep your resolution a secret. Tell friends and family members who will be there to support your resolve to change yourself for the better or improve your health. The best-case scenario is to find a buddy who shares your New Year’s resolution and motivate each other.

6. Reward Yourself
This doesn’t mean that you can eat an entire box of chocolates if your resolution is to eat a better diet. Instead, celebrate your success by treating yourself to something you enjoy that doesn’t contradict your resolution. If you have been sticking to your promise to eat better, for example, reward yourself with new fitness clothing or by going to a movie with a friend.

7. Track Your Progress
Keep track of each small success. Short-term goals are easier to keep, and each small accomplishment will help keep you motivated. Instead of focusing on losing 30 pounds, focus on losing the first five. Keep a food journal to help you stay on track, and reward yourself for each five pounds lost.

8. Don’t Beat Yourself Up
Obsessing over the occasional slip won’t help you achieve your goal. Do the best you can each day, and take one day at a time.

9. Stick to It
Experts say it takes about 21 days for a new activity to become a habit and six months for it to become part of your personality. It won’t happen overnight, so be persistent and patient!

10. Keep Trying
If you have totally run out of steam when it comes to keeping your resolution by mid-February, don’t despair. Start over again! Recommit yourself for 24 hours. You can do anything for 24 hours. The 24-hour increments will soon build on each other and, before you know it, you will be back on track.
Healthy Cooking: Festive Cranberry-Pear Wild Rice Stuffing

Ingredients
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2/3 cup raw wild rice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 2 large organic celery stalks, diced
- 2 medium firm organic pears, cored and diced
- 2 cups finely diced bread of your choice
- 1/3 cup dried organic cranberries
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 2 teaspoons iodized sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup organic apple cider

Directions
- Bring the broth to a simmer in a small saucepan. Stir in the wild rice, then cover and simmer gently until the liquid is absorbed, about 35 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Heat the oil in a medium-size skillet. Add the onion, and sauté until translucent. Add the celery, and sauté over medium heat until both are golden.
- Combine the onion-celery mixture with the cooked wild rice and all the remaining ingredients except the apple juice in a mixing bowl. Stir well to combine. Drizzle the apple juice in slowly, stirring all the while, until the mixture is evenly moistened.

Educational Corner: The Importance of Preventive Care

What is preventive care?
Preventive care includes health services like screenings, check-ups, and patient counseling that are used to prevent illnesses, disease, and other health problems, or to detect illness at an early stage when treatment is likely to work best. Getting recommended preventive services and making healthy lifestyle choices are key steps to good health and well-being.

For a full listing of preventative screenings for your optimal health and wellness, please visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/prevention/](http://www.cdc.gov/prevention/)

Upcoming Months of Awareness

**February**
Heart Health

**March**
Dealing with a Diagnosis
Coping with Caregiving

It can be a labor of love, and sometimes a job of necessity. A total of about 43 million U.S. adults provide unpaid care for someone with a serious health condition each year. These often unsung heroes provide hours of assistance to others. Yet the stress and strain of caregiving can take a toll on their own health. NIH-funded researchers are working to understand the risks these caregivers face. And scientists are seeking better ways to protect caregivers’ health. Many of us will end up becoming a caregiver at some point in our lives. Chances are we’ll be helping out older family members who can’t fully care for themselves. Such caregiving can include everyday tasks, such as helping with meals, schedules, and bathing and dressing. It can also include managing medicines, doctor visits, health insurance, and money.

Caregivers often give emotional support as well. People who provide unpaid care for an elderly, ill, or disabled family member or friend in the home are called informal caregivers. Most are middle-aged. Roughly two-thirds are women. Nearly half of informal caregivers assist someone who’s age 75 or older. As the elderly population continues to grow nationwide, so will the need for informal caregivers. Studies have shown that some people can thrive when caring for others. Caregiving may help to strengthen connections to a loved one. Some find joy or fulfillment in looking after others. But for many, the strain of caregiving can become overwhelming. Friends and family often take on the caregiving role without much help. Most caregivers hold down a full-time job in addition to the hours of unpaid help they give to someone else.

“With all of its rewards, there is a substantial cost to caregiving—financially, physically, and emotionally,” says Dr. Richard J. Hodes, director of NIH’s National Institute on Aging. “One important insight from our research is that because of the stress and time demands placed on caregivers, they are less likely to find time to address their own health problems.” Informal caregivers, for example, may be less likely to fill a needed prescription for themselves or get a screening test for breast cancer. “Caregivers also tend to report lower levels of physical activity, poorer nutrition, and poorer sleep or sleep disturbance,” says Dr. Erin Kent, an NIH expert on cancer caregiving. Studies have linked informal caregiving to a variety of long-term health problems. Caregivers are more likely to have heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and excess weight. Caregivers are also at risk for depression or anxiety. And they’re more likely to have problems with memory and paying attention. “Caregivers may even suffer from physical health problems related to caregiving tasks, such as back or muscle injuries from lifting patients,” Kent adds.

Caregivers may face different challenges and risks depending on the health of the person they’re caring for. Taking care of loved ones with cancer or dementia can be especially demanding. Research suggests that these caregivers bear greater levels of physical and mental burdens than caregivers of the frail elderly or people with diabetes. “Cancer caregivers often spend more hours per day providing more intensive care over a shorter period of time,” Kent says. “The health of cancer patients can deteriorate quickly, which can cause heightened stress for caregivers. And aggressive cancer treatments can leave patients greatly weakened. They may need extra care, and their medications may need to be monitored more often.” Cancer survivorship, too, can bring intense levels of uncertainty and anxiety. “A hallmark of cancer is that it may return months or even years later,” Kent says. “Both cancer survivors and their caregivers may struggle to live with ongoing fear and stress of a cancer recurrence.” Dementia can also create unique challenges to caregivers.

The health care costs alone can take an enormous toll. One recent study found that out-of-pocket spending for families of dementia patients during the last 5 years of life averaged $61,522, which was 81% higher than for older people who died from other causes. Research has found that caregivers for people with dementia have particularly high levels of potentially harmful stress hormones. Caregivers and care recipients often struggle with the problems related to dementia, such as agitation, aggression, trouble sleeping, wandering, and confusion. These caregivers spend more days sick with an infectious disease, have a weaker immune response to the flu vaccine, and have slower wound healing. One major successful and expanding effort to help ease caregiver stress is known as REACH (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer’s Caregiver Health). Nearly a decade ago, NIH-funded researchers showed that a supportive, educational program for dementia caregivers could greatly improve their quality of life and reduce rates of clinical depression. As part of the program, trained staff connected with caregivers over 6 months by making several home visits, telephone calls, and structured telephone support sessions. “REACH showed that what caregivers need is support. They need to know that there are people out there and resources available to help them,” says Dr. John Haaga, who oversees NIH’s behavioral and social research related to aging. The REACH program is now being more widely employed. It’s been adapted for use in free community-based programs, such as in local Area Agencies on Aging. It’s also being used by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and by the Indian Health Service, in collaboration with the Administration for Community Living.

“We know how to support families caring for an older adult. But that knowledge is not easily accessible to the families who need it,” says Dr. Laura Gitlin, a coauthor of the REACH study and an expert on caregiving and aging at Johns Hopkins University. “Caregivers need to know it’s not only acceptable, but recommended, that they find time to care for themselves. They should consider joining a caregiver’s support group, taking breaks each day, and keeping up with their own hobbies and interests.” To learn more about aging-related caregiver resources, contact NIH’s National Institute on Aging at 1-800-222-2225 or niaic@nia.nih.gov. To learn about cancer-related caregiver resources, contact NIH’s National Cancer Institute at 1-800-422-6237. See the Web Links box to find a variety of online caregiving resources.

Source: https://newsinhealth.nih.gov
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UR Fit Program

Are you interested in losing weight, working out in small groups, and learning about your overall health all while having fun? If so, then UR FIT is the program for you!

Throughout the program you will be working in teams to meet goals, build a social environment, and create a lifestyle change!

- Registration Opens: Monday, December 14 @ the Weinstein Center Member Services Desk.
- Spaces are limited to 40 participants!
- Cost of the program: $40 (check, cash or Spider Card)
- Workout sessions with certified trainers (6 options per week)
  - Educational lectures
  - Wellness coaching
  - Nutritional consultations
- 6 week program: January 18-February 26

Questions? Please contact Sarah Sheppard, Fitness Manager, at ssheppa2@richmond.edu

Healthy Hint:

You can’t do much without healthy bones, joints and muscles. As you age, it’s especially important to protect your “moving parts” with aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises. These activities can slow the loss of bone density that makes you weaker and more likely to get hurt as you get older. They also lower your risk for arthritis and osteoporosis down the road. You may not be able to look young forever, but you can help yourself feel young for many years to come.

http://timewellspent-ca.anthem.com/images/hints/bcbs/BCBS_Healthy_Hints_Interactive_Calendar.pdf

SURROUND YOURSELF AROUND FITNESS MINDED PEOPLE. POSITIVITY CAN BE SO CONTAGIOUS!