

Happy New Year

As a brand new year is upon us, many people have made promises to improve themselves, specifically in the areas of healthy eating and exercise. Why do so many wait for a new year to do this? Perhaps the symbolism of entering a new year, at the same time as committing to new habits, is motivating to some. So how can you make sure these new positive changes will actually result in permanent change, as opposed to just a few weeks of enthusiasm that eventually dissolves back into old habits? Let's discuss ways to make lifestyle modifications that will last forever, benefiting yourself, and your loved ones. Cheers to a happy and healthy 2017! ~Marissa



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Reality Bites:

You may be tempted to sign up for the most current diet plan that promises weight loss, but beware, although you will most likely lose the weight, it will probably come back. The reason is that most "diet" plans do not work because they do not teach the basic principles of nutrition and exercise that will last a lifetime.

For example, if a diet plan is asking you to drink only beet juice for breakfast and to run 4 days a week for 4 weeks, but you HATE beets and running, once the 4 weeks are over, you're not going to continue, you haven't learned anything, and any weight lost will be regained.

Warning against FAD diets and trends:

If any plan has the following sales points, it's most likely a fad diet:

- ***Severely limits calories below your metabolic needs***
- ***Requires everyone to restrict a food group***
- ***Requires skipping meals***
- ***Highlights their program to be "Detoxifying" or "Cleansing"***
- ***Requires sketchy supplements with no research to back them up***

Many people assume that a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), like myself, only help people lose weight by putting them on diets and giving them meal plans. With the title of "dietitian", I understand that assumption. Actually, helping people with weight loss is just part of my patient base, and I do NOT put people on diets. RDN's provide medical nutrition therapy to help people develop lifestyle modifications to manage and improve their nutrition related medical conditions such as diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, kidney disease, weight issues, food allergies, and others. To achieve this, RDN's assess and analyze a patient's whole self, including medical history, social history, relationship with food, and current eating and exercise habits. Since RDN's education and training includes anatomy, physiology, nutrition science, and counseling, we are able to connect the dots to teach how certain foods affect the body in different ways. We are also able to counsel patients to make small changes that fit their individual lifestyle, and help guide them through the confusing arena of "healthy eating", with the overall goal of optimal health. Anyone can Google "how to lower blood sugar", and read the suggested lifestyle changes, but few can follow through without the support of a professional who will provide counseling on realistic and safe strategies to accomplish those changes. I'll focus on weight control in this issue since it is important. Research has shown that if you are overweight, losing a moderate amount of weight can reduce your risk of developing certain medical conditions, and can help improve conditions that already exist. Losing the weight is often easy, but maintaining the weight can be the biggest challenge. So what are some tips for doing so? Please read on for guidance. *Marissa Martorana, RDN*

Preparing your mind for successful weight loss and maintenance:

- ✓ Know your past and present medical history. I have no two patients the same. Knowing your medical history will help develop the most effective eating and exercise plan.
- ✓ Say goodbye to wanting a quick fix. Once you get over wanting to lose weight fast, you're ready to discuss the fundamental framework for developing healthy habits.
- ✓ Accept that weight loss may be slow and steady; you didn't gain the weight overnight so it will take time to lose it, and maintain the loss.
- ✓ Understand that it is ok if you feel like you're just not ready to talk about changing. It's ok! Try to reflect on what's keeping you from seeking help on gaining control of your health, and revisit the idea in a couple of weeks.
- ✓ Delete the word "diet" from your mind. Diets do not work to maintain a healthy weight long term.
- ✓ Realize the importance of seeking help from an RDN. Success is not going to come after one meeting. Follow up appointments are key in identifying barriers that are keeping you from achieving success.

Nutrition 101:

The 3 macronutrients that make up the food that we eat are:

1) carbohydrates 2) proteins 3) fats

- Including the healthiest choices of each macro to build your meals & snacks is imperative for weight control
- Know how much of each macro your body requires to support weight loss and maintenance

Fresh fruits and vegetables offer powerful health benefits and should be included in most meals & snacks

Portion sizes are often times misunderstood and underestimated. Grasping this concept is key for achieving a healthy weight

Beware of liquid calories, which can easily add up! For example, 1 venti caramel macchiato, 1 large Jamba juice, and 3 margaritas total to around 1,300 calories!



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Not sure how to begin?

If the thought of revamping your eating and exercise habits is overwhelming, rest assured you're not alone. Meals are not going to magically appear in your kitchen. Some people need guidance from the grocery store aisles, and in their kitchens, to get a kick-start into developing healthy habits such as label reading, healthy cooking, portion control, and meal prep. Gaining confidence to grocery shop with a planned list, label read, and prepare wholesome meals and snacks are skills that will aid in a lifetime of health and wellness. If this sounds like you, consider signing up for a "grocery store tour". It includes a free 20-minute phone consultation to gather information about your daily schedule, food preferences, and reasons why you want to make a change. Following that, a personalized grocery list will be created, and we will walk the grocery store aisles together.

Don't do "cheat days"! They set your mind up for grouping foods into good and bad. Instead, learn to grasp and practice the concept of moderation and you'll be much happier, and less likely to binge, undoing all of your hard work.

