New Year, New You: 5 Ways to Help Make Your Resolutions a Reality

If you’re resolving to lose weight, exercise more or want to make other positive lifestyle changes in 2017, you’re not alone: Nearly half of all U.S. adults make New Year’s resolutions.

Research suggests that making a resolution is a positive indicator that you’re committed to taking steps to change an unwanted behavior. In fact, studies reveal that individuals who make resolutions timed to the New Year are 10 times more likely to achieve their goals, compared to those who don’t make any official New Year’s resolutions, but who do want to improve their lifestyle. (1)

Use these three resolution solutions to help you succeed once and for all:

1. Make “SMART” Resolutions

Many well-intentioned resolvers never have a chance at being successful because their goals are pie-in-the-sky, too vague or any other number of reasons that make them unattainable. Goals should be Specific, Measurable, And Realistic and have a specific Timeframe for completion. An example of a smart resolution would be, “I’m going to drink one glass of water in place of one sugary beverage five days a week for the next two months.”

2. Think Small to Achieve Big Results

It’s better to start with one or two simple diet substitutions that you can live with rather than trying to completely overhaul your lifestyle. Research also suggests that changing your food environment (i.e. what’s in your pantry; how food is organized in your refrigerator and what’s on your countertops) can help you achieve your goals. (2)

For example, a step to improve your food environment is to have water—from a bottle or tap—at your desk, in your car and in your refrigerator to encourage you to drink calorie- and sugar-free water in place of sugar-sweetened beverages.

3. Have Strategies to Handle Setbacks

Long-term success at losing weight or improving fitness is about making progress, not achieving perfection. In fact, trying to stick to an 80:20 approach, eating right 80 percent of the time and allowing for indulgences for 20 percent, is the best method for living lean for life. Everyone has setbacks, but those who get back on track quickly are more likely to meet their long-term goals.
References:
