

Lifestyle Changes Key to Weight Loss in New Year

Small steps can help people finally achieve that elusive resolution, expert says

URL of this page: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_132660.html (*this news item will not be available after 03/30/2013)

By Robert Preidt

Sunday, December 30, 2012



SUNDAY, Dec. 30 (HealthDay News) -- Many people will resolve to lose weight in 2013 but few of them will take the right steps to achieve that goal, an expert says.

"January is the time of year when gyms get flooded with new and returning members ready to try Zumba or spin classes, and dieters start filling their grocery carts with fruits and vegetables instead of chips and cookies," Alenka Ravnik-List, diabetes program coordinator at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City, said in a center news release. "But unfortunately, too often people with good intentions will fail."

But following a few rules can help people change their lifestyle and lose weight.

Ravnik-List offered the following advice:

- Don't skip breakfast. Research shows that eating breakfast every day can help you lose weight and keep it off.
- Keep a journal of everything you eat. People who keep food diaries eat about 15 percent less food than those who don't.
- Get walking. Sedentary people take only about 3,000 steps a day. Adding another 3,000 steps will help you maintain your current weight and getting more than 10,000 steps a day will help you lose weight.
- Watch your serving sizes. Eat meals on a medium-sized plate (about eight to nine inches wide). A bigger plate encourages you to eat more because you can fit more food on it. Load half of your plate with colorful vegetables and the other half with lean protein and whole grain starches.
- Weigh yourself at least once a week. Doing so will help you detect small weight gains before they get out of control.
- Don't be too strict with yourself. Everyone has a craving they can't avoid, so don't. Plan a night out with friends and satisfy your craving. Moderation is the key to success.

"If you follow these tips, maybe next year you can pick a different New Year's resolution because you will feel both physically and mentally better about yourself," Ravnik-List said.

SOURCE: Mount Sinai Medical Center, news release, Nov. 26, 2012

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Page last updated on 31 December 2012