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Top Healthiest New Year Resolutions



Each January, roughly one in three Americans resolve to better themselves in some way. A much smaller percentage of people actually make good on those resolutions. While about 75% of people stick to their goals for at least a week, less than half (46%) are still on target six months later, a study found.

It's hard to keep up the enthusiasm months after you've swept up the confetti, but it's not impossible. This year, pick one of the following worthy resolutions, and stick with it. Here's to your health!

Lose weight

The fact that this is perennially among the most popular resolutions suggests just how difficult it is to commit to. But you can succeed if you don't expect overnight success. "You want results yesterday, and desperation mode kicks in," says Pam Peeke, MD, author of *Body for Life for Women*. "Beware of the valley of quickie cures." Also, plan for bumps in the road. Use a food journal to keep track of what you eat and have a support system in place. "Around week four to six...people become excuse mills," Dr. Peeke says. "That's why it's important to have someone there on a regular basis to get you through those rough times." A "biggest loser challenge" at your worksite can really be a huge help in keeping one on track and motivated.



Quit smoking



Fear that you've failed too many times to try again? Talk to any ex-smoker, and you'll see that multiple attempts are often the path to success. Try different methods to find out what works. And think of the cash you'll save! "It's one of the harder habits to quit," says Merle Myerson, MD, director of the Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Program at St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals, in New York City. He always tells people to think of how much money they will save (all the health benefits are obvious!)

Cut your stress

A little pressure now and again won't kill us; in fact, short bouts of stress give us an energy boost. But if stress is chronic, it can increase your risk of—or worsen—insomnia, depression, obesity, heart disease, and more. Long work hours, little sleep, no exercise, poor diet, and not spending time with family and friends can contribute to stress, says Roberta Lee, MD, an integrative medicine specialist at Beth Israel Medical Center, in New York City, and the author of *The Super Stress Solution*. "Stress is an inevitable part of life," she says. "Relaxation, sleep, socializing, and taking vacations are all things we tell ourselves we deserve but don't allow ourselves to have." **Decide now on at least one change you can make or stress release method you can incorporate right now and try to stick with it.**



Go back to school



No matter how old you are, heading back to the classroom can help revamp your career, introduce you to new friends, and even boost your brainpower. A 2007 study found that middle-age adults who had gone back to school (including night school) sometime in the previous quarter century had stronger memories and verbal skills than those who did not. What's more, several studies have linked higher educational attainment to a decreased risk of Alzheimer's disease. "You are gaining a sense of accomplishment by gaining new knowledge, and you are out there meeting people and creating possibilities that were never there before," Kanaris says.

Cut back on alcohol

While much has been written about the health benefits of a small amount of alcohol, too much tipping is still the bigger problem. (In fact, binge drinking seems to be on the rise.) Drinking alcohol in excess affects the brain's neurotransmitters and can increase the risk of depression, memory loss, or even seizures. Chronic heavy drinking boosts your risk of liver and heart disease, hypertension, stroke, and mental deterioration, and even cancers of the mouth, throat, liver, and breast.

Volunteer

We tend to think our own bliss relies on bettering ourselves, but our happiness also increases when we help others, says Peter Kanaris, PhD, coordinator of public education for the New York State Psychological Association.

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Special points of interest:

- Healthy New Year Resolutions
- January 19–25 is Healthy Weight Week
- What is your ideal weight?
- Lack of sleep could make you gain weight
- Are there harmful chemicals in your toothpaste?

GO INTO THE WORLD AND DO WELL. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, GO INTO THE WORLD AND DO GOOD.
(MINOR MYERS, JR.)



What Is A Healthy Weight?

Although most of us would love to be given a straightforward solution to **calculate our healthy or ideal weight**, sadly it isn't that black and white. Your "healthy" weight cannot simply be calculated from a general source - people's healthy weight, or ideal weight, depends on several factors, including their age, sex, body type, bone density, muscle-fat-ratio, overall general health, and height.

Over the last few decades, using BMI (body mass index) was seen as an excellent means for calculating a person's healthy weight. However, BMI should only be taken as a ballpark calculation with several limitations. BMI is more useful when studying large populations, rather than individuals.

Your healthy weight may be different from friends and family, often even if you are the same sex and height. You should not compare yourself to people around you, because we are all different and you run the risk of either aiming for a body weight that is too high or too low. Even comparing yourself to people outside your immediate vicinity is not ideal.

To add confusion to deciding what weight you should aim for, not even experts in different countries seem to agree. A healthy weight in the United Kingdom or the USA is slightly higher than what is set in, for example The Netherlands. If you were in Holland you would be aiming for a lower target weight than if you were in the USA. Maybe that explains why so many adults are obese in the USA.

BMI (Body Mass Index) and Waist-Hip Ratio are two ways doctors and other health care professionals gauge a person's weight, when deciding how close or far they are from a healthy one. Of the two, Waist-Hip Ratio is probably more accurate.

In North America, Europe and much of the rest of the world, the following BMIs point to how a person's weight is classified:

- ⇒ 18.5 - underweight
- ⇒ 18.5 to 24.999 - ideal
- ⇒ 25 to 29.999 - overweight
- ⇒ 30+ - obese
- ⇒ 40 - morbidly obese

BMI (Body Mass Index) - This measurement is a number derived from a person's weight and height.

The person's weight in kilograms (kilos) is divided by the square of their height in meters. For example:

- Imagine a person weighs 176 pounds or 80 kilos and is 1.8 meters or 72 inches tall (1 inch = .025 meters).
- 3.24 is 1.8^2 (their height squared)
- 80 divided by 3.24 = a **Body Mass Index of 24.69**

The drawback with BMI is that it does not take into account the person's measurements. For example, a super fit Olympic athlete may have the same height and weight as an unfit couch potato - they would have the same BMI. However, the couch potatoes body measurements would be completely different.



Both men shown here have the same height and weight thus equal BMI's. They CLEARLY are not in the same physical condition!



Waist-Hip Ratio, also known as WHR, looks at the ratio of a person's waist circumference with their hip circumference. The smallest waist measurement is taken, which is generally just above the navel, this total is divided by their hip circumference at its widest part. **In the thinner person, the waist is measured at its narrowest point. For the heavier person with a convex waist (big belly), it is measured approx. 1 inch above the belly button. Hips are measured at the widest point of the buttocks in the lean person, and at the great trochanters in the heavier individuals.**

If an adult female has a 27-inch waist and 36-inch hips, her WHR is 27 divided by 36 or a WHR of 0.75.



Target WHR's are different for males and females:

For Men:

- ⇒ WHR for men- <0.9 - means he has a very low risk of having cardiovascular health problems
- ⇒ From 0.9 to 0.99 - means he is at moderate risk of cardiovascular health problems
- ⇒ >1 - means his risk of cardiovascular problems are high

For Women:

- ⇒ <0.8 - means she has a very low risk of having cardiovascular health problems
- ⇒ From 0.8 to 0.89 - means she is at moderate risk of cardiovascular health problems
- ⇒ 0.9 or more - means her risk of cardiovascular problems are high

Essential fat is the fat we need for survival. Females have a higher proportion of their bodies made up of essential fat than men - between 2% and 5% in adult males and 10% and 13% in adult females.

Waist-Hip Ratio versus Body Mass Index

WHR will give you a much better idea regarding how near you are to a healthy weight, compared to BMI.

Apple-shaped people tend to carry most of their fat around their mid-section. This will result in a larger WHRs and increase their risk of developing diseases, especially cardiovascular problems, Pear-shaped individuals, on the otherhand, fat tends to accumulate on their hips.

What are the drawbacks with WHR? - it still does not measure the total body fat percentage of the individual, or their muscle-to-fat ratio. However, most agree it is a superior predictor of health risks, and a better measure of ideal weight.

Storage fat is

the accumulation of fat in adipose tissue. Some storage fat also serves to protect the internal organs located in the abdomen and chest. Adipose tissue is a type of tissue that contains stored fat.

Resource: Media News Today

Chemicals in Cosmetics?

Would you ever think to brush your teeth with a pesticide? Would you wash your hair with a petroleum-derived contaminant formed in the manufacture of shampoo? Of course not! However, you may be using a product that contains such chemicals and not even know it.

When it comes to beauty products (and this includes products used by men), the effects of the ingredients they contain can be more than just skin deep. The cosmetics industry uses thousands of synthetic chemicals in its products, in everything from lipstick and lotion to shampoo and shaving cream.

Many of these substances are also used in industrial manufacturing processes to clean industrial equipment, stabilize pesticides and grease gears. And we can all agree that an ingredient that effectively scours a garage floor may not be the best choice for a facial cleanser.

In the U.S., major loopholes in federal law allow the cosmetics industry to put thousands of synthetic chemicals into personal care products, even if those chemicals are linked to cancer, infertility or birth defects. At the same time as untested chemicals have been steadily introduced into our environment, breast cancer incidence has risen dramatically.

Below are just a few of the chemicals commonly found in cosmetics and what they do to us.

TRICIOSAN is used in antibacterial soaps, deodorants and toothpastes to limit the growth of bacteria and mold. The chemical, which is classified as a pesticide, can affect the body's hormone systems—especially thyroid hormones, which regulate metabolism—and may disrupt normal breast development. Widespread use of triclosan may also contribute to bacterial resistance to antimicrobial agents.

Shaving creams, spray sunscreens and foundations, and anti-fungal treatments that contain the propellant isobutene may be contaminated with the carcinogen **1,3-BUTADIENE**. Exposure occurs mainly through inhalation. This chemical has been found to increase mammary tumors in rodents.

LEAD may be a contaminant in over 650 cosmetic products, including sunscreens, foundation, nail colors, lipsticks and whitening toothpaste. Lead is a proven neurotoxin, linked to learning, language and behavioral problems. It has also been linked to miscarriage, reduced fertility in men and women, and delays in puberty onset in girls.

ALUMINUM is found in some underarm antiperspirants. Aluminum is a metal that mimics estrogen and can also cause direct damage to DNA. Studies have not shown a direct causal link to breast cancer risk, but breast tissue has been shown to concentrate aluminum in the same area where the highest proportion of breast cancers are originally diagnosed.

So what can we do? Well, just like when purchasing food products, we learn to read the labels of the cosmetic products we are buying. Try to use products that are free of mineral oil, dyes, preservatives, fragrances, animal-by-products, parabens, petrolatum, benzene, toluene, PABA. Look for manufacturers who don't use artificial anything. Be informed and beware. For more information regarding this topic, visit www.BrestCancerFund.org



Top Healthiest New Year Resolutions (continued from pg 1)

Get more sleep

You probably already know that a good night's rest can do wonders for your mood—and appearance. But sleep is more beneficial to your health than you might realize. A lack of sleep has been linked to a greater risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes. And sleep is crucial for strengthening memories (a process led consolidation). Check out the article on the next page.



Travel

The joys and rewards of vacations can last long after the suitcase is put away. "We can often get stuck in a rut, and we can't get out of our own way," Kanaris says. "Everything becomes familiar and too routine."



But traveling allows us to tap into life as an adventure, and we can make changes in our lives without having to do anything too bold or dramatic.

"It makes you feel rejuvenated and replenished," he adds. "It gets you out of your typical scenery, and the effects are revitalizing. It's another form of new discovery and learning, and great for the body and the soul."

So set reachable goals this year and set yourself up for success. Start with small changes. Strive for resolutions that will make a positive impact on your life. Work hard to make it happen. Surround yourself with supportive people and think positive!!!! YOU CAN DO IT!





Losing Sleep Can Lead to Gaining Weight

"There are over two dozen studies that suggest that people who sleep less tend to weigh more," says Sanjay Patel, MD, assistant professor of medicine at Case Western Reserve University, in Cleveland, Ohio. One such study, published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, examined approximately 1,000 people, and found a link between weight and time spent asleep. On average, people who were overweight slept 16 minutes less per day than normal weight people -- a small, but significant difference. Recent research led by Patel followed 68,183 women, all part of the Nurses' Health Study, for 16 years. The results: Those who slept 5 hours or less a night were nearly a third more likely to gain 30 pounds or more than women who slept 7 hours per night.

There are several different ways losing sleep can thwart your weight loss efforts. Research from the University of Chicago suggests that sleep deprivation may lead to a change in how our bodies regulate appetite, leading us to crave more food. "You may start not only eating more, but eating unhealthy foods -- those high in fat and carbohydrates," says Patel. "Another possibility is that because people who are sleep-deprived feel more fatigued, thus they exercise less. Sleep deprivation can also change your basal metabolic rate, slowing down how many calories you burn just doing basic life-sustaining activities, like breathing and maintaining body temperature."

For more information and some sleep secrets that can help you lose weight, go to: <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/sleep-more-weigh-less>

Calories Burnt during Winter Activities

How many calories could you burn participating in some of winter's typical activities? This is based on a 150 pound person for 30 minutes of activity.

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Chopping Wood | 204 |
| Cleaning (dusting, light house-work) | 85 |
| Vacuuming | 119 |
| Downhill skiing | 216 |
| Walk (15 min/mile) | 162 |
| Shoveling Snow | 204 |
| Jump Roping | 306 |
| Boxing (with punching bag) | 202 |
| Snow-shoeing | 273 |

Recipe Corner

Quick Roast Chicken & Root Vegetables

Roasted chicken in 45 minutes? No problem. This technique of starting bone-in chicken breasts on the stovetop and finishing them in a hot oven with vegetables gets a hearty dinner on the table in a hurry. While everything roasts, you still have time to make a quick pan sauce with shallot and Dijon mustard. Serve with a spinach salad.



Ingredients:

- 1 pound turnips, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1 pound baby potatoes, quartered
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram or 1 teaspoon dried
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 bone-in chicken breasts (12 ounces each), skin and fat removed, cut in half crosswise
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons red or white wine vinegar

Nutrition:

Per serving: 333 calories; 10 g fat (2 g sat , 6 g mono); 72 mg cholesterol; 29 g carbohydrates; 31 g protein; 4 g fiber; 770 mg sodium; 1033 mg potassium.

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss turnips, potatoes, 1 tablespoon oil, marjoram, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper together in a medium bowl. Spread in an even layer on a large baking sheet. Roast for 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, place flour in a shallow dish. Transfer 2 teaspoons of the flour to a small bowl and whisk in broth; set aside. Season chicken with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Dredge the chicken in the flour, shaking off excess. (Discard any leftover flour.)
3. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken, skinned-side down, and cook until well browned on the bottom, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat.
4. After the vegetables have been roasting for 15 minutes, stir them and place one piece of chicken, skinned-side up, in each corner of the baking sheet. (Set the skillet aside.) Return the vegetables and chicken to the oven and roast until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes more.
5. When the chicken and vegetables have about 10 minutes left, return the skillet to medium heat. Add shallot and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Whisk the reserved broth mixture again, add to the pan and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced by about half, about 8 minutes. Stir in mustard and vinegar. Serve the chicken and vegetables with the sauce.

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Do something healthy for yourself today!

