

How to Keep a Resolution

It's January 3, how are you doing with keeping your New Year's resolution? With some planning and effort, you can make resolutions to change behaviors that have lasting effect. Here are some tips for successfully keeping your resolutions:

- Set specific, realistic goals that can be measured and attained within a reasonable period of time
- Develop a detailed plan of action with daily or weekly steps you can take toward achieving your goal (s)
- Tell others about your resolution to gain their support and hold yourself accountable to someone
- Track your progress – keep food or exercise logs or note days without smoking or whatever the changed behavior was
- Identify barriers that may prevent you from reaching your goal and think of ways to overcome them
- Reward your successes with non-food rewards such as buying a new piece of exercise clothing or watching your favorite TV program
- Control your environment and limit exposure to high risk situations – don't go into a bakery if you are trying to limit sweets or hang out with friends who smoke if you are trying to quit smoking
- Plan for occasional slips in your resolutions. Consider walking away from a high risk situation, distracting yourself, taking a walk or calling a friend. Don't let a lapse turn into a relapse and lead to a collapse! Resolve to get yourself back on track the next meal or the next day.
- Avoid getting negative about yourself or your slip-ups. Focus on your positive behaviors and remind yourself slip-ups are normal. Just because you get the urge to smoke or eat some high calorie food doesn't mean you have to. You always have choices to make. Keep your goal in sight. Ask yourself if having a cigarette or taking a second helping at meals will help move you closer to achieving your goal of quitting tobacco or losing weight.



Keeping a resolution isn't a 100-yard dash, it's a marathon. Remember that meaningful change takes time. It usually takes at least 30 days to form a new habit and another three to six months before a new behavior becomes routine. Good luck with keeping your resolutions in the New Year!