

## Making Your New Year's Resolution Stick

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Midnight champagne toasts, watching the ball drop from Times Square and making New Year's Resolutions. All are wonderful traditions and, for most of us, they are all distant memories by now. If you blew your diet with bowl game appetizers, you may think you're too far off track to stick with your healthy plan. Don't be too hard on yourself. Take time to reflect on what went wrong and set a few realistic goals to get back on track.



When trying to lose weight, don't go for a quick, easy fix. Avoiding crash diets that promise unrealistic outcomes is your best bet to staying healthy and keeping weight off for many months to come. Eating right will not only help you lose weight, but will help you avoid long-term health problems like high blood pressure, diabetes and high blood cholesterol.

Choose just a few of the 10 Health Tips below, and you'll be well on your way to a healthier body in 2013:

1. Eat a nutritious breakfast, including at least three of the five food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables, milk and protein) every day. People who eat breakfast everyday weigh less than their breakfast skipping counterparts. Studies suggest that breakfast reduces your hunger throughout the day and prevents "grazing." Skip breakfast foods that are high in sugar. Instead, be sure to incorporate high protein foods like eggs, low fat cheese and yogurt.
2. Make snacks count. Consider snacks part of a healthy diet. By choosing whole grains, low fat dairy, proteins, fruits and vegetables, you can make sure your snacks are providing more than just calories. For a healthy and filling snack, try 10 almonds with 1/4 cup dried fruit or 1-ounce of low fat cheese with 1 cup of baby carrots.
3. Watch your portion size. Most of us are accustomed to eating larger portions than we need. Eat meals and snacks from a smaller plate and use measuring cups and spoons to ensure you aren't over-indulging.
4. Don't drink your calories. Frappe Mochas, strawberry milkshakes, energy drinks and cocktails can pack on calories without making you feel full. When you're thirsty, go with a tall glass of water with lemon, low fat milk and other low-sugar beverages like green tea or fruit spritzers.
5. Choose carbohydrate foods wisely and limit your intake of added sugars. Foods and drinks high in added sugars like cakes, cookies, soda and sweetened breakfast cereal are bad for your waistline and your heart. Not only are they loaded with calories, but they provide few nutrients.
6. Replace white breads, pastas and other refined flours with whole grains. Foods made from white flour are low in fiber and digest more quickly than whole grains. Over time, this may cause your blood sugar and insulin levels to rise to unhealthy levels.
7. Load up on nutrient-rich fruits and veggies, especially those of the dark green and orange variety. When used to replace higher calorie foods, all fruits and vegetables promote weight loss. However, those that are dark green and orange are jam-packed with antioxidants like vitamins A and C which give your immune system the boost it needs during cold winter months.

8. Replace meats with vegetable-based proteins like beans or tofu, several times per week. Dried beans are a good source of soluble fiber (the type that reduces cholesterol), protein, folate and saponins—a phytochemical that may protect against cancer.
9. Help reduce your body's inflammation level by choosing anti-inflammatory foods like salmon, walnuts, tart cherries, olive oil, berries and freshly ground flaxseed.
10. Many people want to go green and purchase organic foods. Some studies have shown that organic foods are healthier than non-organic. It's important to balance cost with the benefits of eating organic. Produce with thin skins, and ones that aren't peeled before eating, are the smartest organic purchases. Recently, many consumers have started buying more locally-grown foods too. Local farmers often use less pesticides and chemicals, plus local foods are purchased fresh, so they are more flavorful and nutrient-rich.

Want to incorporate some of these tips into a healthy New Year meal? Try the following recipe, compliments of the American Institute for Cancer Research (<http://www.aicr.org/>).

## Spinach and Clementine Salad (serves 8)

### **Salad:**

2 pounds clementines (8-12)  
2 pounds baby spinach, washed and dried  
4 celery stalks, cut into thin diagonal slices  
1/2 cup walnut pieces, toasted  
1 cup red onion, sliced thin  
1/4 cup dried cherries or cranberries

### **Dressing:**

2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar  
Pinch of sugar  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1 small clove garlic, minced  
Dash of salt and freshly ground black pepper

### **Direction:**

Peel clementines, removing all white pith. Separate segments. Put in a large salad bowl with spinach, celery, nuts, onions and berries. Mix well.

Whisk dressing ingredients together in a small bowl. Drizzle over salad. Serve and enjoy!

### **Nutrition Facts (per serving):**

195 Calories, 12 gms total fat (1 gm. saturated fat), 19 gms carbohydrate, 6 gms protein, 6 gms dietary fiber, 120 mg sodium

If you'd like to learn more about healthier approaches to New Years' Resolutions, visit a registered dietitian and/or check out <http://www.eatright.org/Public/>



Amy Gannon is a Registered Dietitian and member of the WV Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. As the nation's food and nutrition experts, registered dietitians are committed to improving the health of their communities. To find a registered dietitian in your area, visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and click on "Find a Registered Dietitian."