

Have a Healthy New Year!

Fix your bad habits for good in 2011

What better way to start the New Year than with a fresh outlook on life and a healthier body? In practice, however, this annual ritual has become a bit of a joke, to the point that people make bets about how long their friends' and loved ones' resolutions are going to last. For some, it's gotten so futile that they've stopped making resolutions altogether. The problem is that many resolutions are unrealistic and poorly executed. Most resolutions involve inspiration but no preparation. For long-term success, a detailed and sustainable action plan is key.

I resolve to... quit smoking!

5 Good Reasons to Quit Smoking for the New Year

- #5 You'll have fewer burn holes in your clothes and furniture
- #4 Your month won't taste like an ashtray in the morning
- #3 You can improve your health
- #2 You could reduce your rates on insurance policies
- #1 For yourself, your family and your friends

All jokes aside, cigarette smoking has been identified as the most important source of preventable disease and illness and premature death worldwide. Smoking-related diseases claim an estimated 443,000 American lives



each year, including those affected indirectly, such as babies born prematurely due to prenatal maternal smoking and victims of "secondhand" exposure to tobacco. According to the Surgeon General, quitting smoking is the single most important step a smoker can take to improve the length and quality of life. As soon as you quit, your body begins to repair the damage caused by smoking. The Health Department offers smoking cessation classes to those interested. Call Kerri Teachout for details at 269-927-5668.

I resolve to... lose weight!

Gyms throughout America are packed every January, but by March the crowds have thinned out (so to speak) because people have lost the motivation to stick to their fitness goals.

To avoid being part of the masses who give up quickly, it is important to set specific goals such as how often you want to work out or how much weight you want to lose. It's also important to set a



time frame in which you hope to have accomplished your goals. Once your goals are set, make sure you have a specific plan to meet them and a way to hold yourself accountable for progress. This could include keeping a food journal if you are dieting, or scheduling your workout times with a buddy to assure you won't skip them.



It is important to talk to your healthcare professional to create a diet that's right for you, and follow these general tips to cut back:

Tips to eat less this year:

1. Plate your main course in the kitchen.
2. Use smaller plates and tall, skinny glasses.
3. Slow down— stop, look, and listen while you eat
4. Chew gum or keep baby carrots nearby while cooking to stop "sampling" before a meal.
5. Serve kids smaller portions to avoid eating their leftovers.
6. Don't miss meals.
7. Close the kitchen 2 hours before bedtime.
8. Keep snacks out of sight.
9. Brush your teeth right after dinner.
10. Make TV a food-free activity.

For more information :

Call the health department at (269) 926-7121 or visit www.bchdmi.org

