



Berrien County Health Department:

Preventing Disease, Prolonging Life and Protecting the Health of the Community.



Have A Healthy New Year!

Happy New Year from everyone at the Berrien County Health Department! This time of year many people take the opportunity to do make a resolution to do something better for themselves. Resolutions like quitting smoking, eating better, getting more exercise are some familiar themes. The Health Department would like to take this opportunity to offer some advice to all of those who have decided to start 2008 on a healthier foot.

One of the biggest mistakes people make when creating a

resolution is not setting goals. We have all set goals in our lives, weather it be as simple as finishing all the dishes in the house or more complex such as graduating college. The problem is we often lose sight of our goals, that is why we should write them down.

Research shows us that people who write down their goals and look at them everyday are much more likely to achieve their goals over people who do not write goals down. Take a few minutes every morning and write down your goals for the

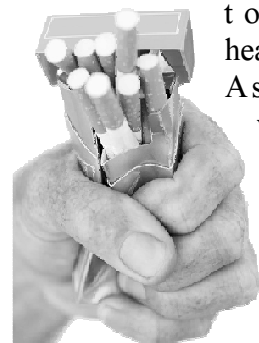
day, week, month, year, 10 years. You'll soon discover that the decisions you make throughout the day are tuned into decisions that will help you achieve your goals. Also give yourself a deadline and reward for completing your goal; this will give you a target to achieve.

After you have started your plan for achieving your goals you can start making decisions that will help you complete them. Below are a few of the resolutions people set and some easy to implement suggestions.

This year I will....

Quit Smoking!

Quitting smoking is a huge step toward a healthier you.



Ask anyone who has quit and you'll hear many different suggestions for

how to quit. You might also hear that it took the quitter more than one time to finally kick the habit. There a few things you must do in order to quit. The most important thing is that YOU want to quit, unless YOU want to quit YOU won't. Be prepared to handle the cravings. Nicotine is a very addictive substance and causes people who are addicted to crave it, so you must be ready to handle the crav-

ings. You can join a support group for others trying to quit, find a hobby that occupies your hands and mind and keeps you busy, avoid places you used to smoke, exercise, chew gum or go to a smoke free place such as a movie theater, mall, or church.

The Health Department offers smoking cessation classes to those interested. Call Kerri Teachout for details at 927-5668.

This year I will... Lose Weight!

If your goal is lose a few extra pounds or even a lot of extra weight there are some simple tips that will help.

First is to watch what you eat. Fruits and vegetables are better for your body than candy and salty high fat food. DON'T skip breakfast; eating a well balanced breakfast will jump-start your metabolism and help you burn calories all day long. Exercise- you would be amazed

at the difference in the way you feel after exercising. Don't be afraid of exercise, and know that you don't have to buy the latest expensive gadget to get a good workout.

One of the easiest ways to lose weight: drink water! Sugary juices and soda pop are enemies of fat loss.

Simply take a 20 minute walk around the mall (outdoors when the weather gets better). If you can, join a gym. Many people are afraid to join a gym because

they don't know what to do, but you would be surprised at how many people in a gym are willing to share all of their knowledge with you. (Just make sure you ask them when they aren't in the middle of a lift!) Also, most people in a gym are far too involved with what they are doing to judge you.

Before you start any weight loss program, consult your doctor; She will be able to give you more advice that is specific to you. Also, be sure you have the patience to see the results.

Healthy Habits in December!

What a wonderful time to give yourself and your family the gift of good health! With a few simple changes, you can develop healthy habits to last a lifetime! The Health Department will provide information about stress relief, exercise, healthy eating, alcohol awareness and New Year's resolutions. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121.**

New Years Resolution Facts

The top four resolutions people make are to:

1. Increase exercise
2. Be more conscientious about work or school
3. Develop better eating habits
4. Stop smoking, drinking, or using drugs (including caffeine)

How to stick to your resolutions:

- Be realistic. Choose a goal that you know you can reach.
- Reward yourself. Allow yourself something you enjoy when you reach a goal (just don't make it food if you've been dieting!).
- Have a plan. Know how you will deal with temptations, such as to have a cigarette or skip exercising.
- Talk to others for support. Ask friends and family to help you stick to your resolutions. Find someone who shares your resolution.



For more information about smoking cessation and other health issues, call the Berrien County Health Department at 926-7121.

Special thanks to Nate Hill, Prevention Specialist, for his help with this article!

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone
P.O. Box 706
926-7121

M-139 Office
2106 S. M-139
927-5623

Niles

1205 N. Front St.
684-2800

Three Oaks

21 N. Elm
756-2008

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