



live well, work well

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Tips for Sticking to Your Resolutions

It's not uncommon for the motivation to stick to New Year's resolutions to fizzle out as quickly as an uncorked bottle of champagne. The enthusiasm of new goals often fades as the temptation to indulge takes over. Stick with your resolutions this year by following these tips when selecting what to aim for:

- Set specific goals. A vague goal is more easily broken. Try taking a larger goal and dividing it into manageable tasks.
- Set measurable goals. If there's no way to track your progress, you'll have more opportunity to slip—make sure there are ways for you to check your progress along the way.
- Choose goals that are meaningful to you, not to somebody else. If you're doing it for yourself, rather than to please others, you'll have much more motivation to succeed.
- Aim to achieve, not to avoid. Rather than saying you'll stop eating unhealthy snacks, think of what you want to achieve,

such as snacking on fruits or vegetables when your stomach starts to rumble.

- Don't do what you've always done. Try something new, especially if what you've been doing hasn't worked.
- Make family and friends aware of your resolutions—tell them what you're trying to achieve and ask them to hold you accountable. If you're the only one who knows your goals, it may be easier to give up on them.



Thyroid Awareness Month

Thyroid disorders are not uncommon. This month, promote thyroid awareness by discussing the following risk factors and detection methods:

- Thyroid conditions are genetic
- Certain medications can affect your thyroid, such as lithium and amiodarone
- Radiation therapy to the head or neck could affect your thyroid. For example, radiation therapy for tonsils, an enlarged thymus or acne
- The Thyroid Neck Check is an easy way to check for possible disorders—for instructions, visit www.empoweryourhealth.org/neck-check

DID YOU KNOW

Roughly 1 in 10 Americans may be affected by thyroid disorders, but more than half of these individuals remain undiagnosed.



Busting Through Your Weight Loss Plateau

When you first start a new exercise routine, your body tends to shed excess water weight so it appears as though you are trimming the fat easily and quickly. After this happens, the pounds may take much longer to drop off. Don't let the plateau discourage you, though. Try these tips to stay on track:

- Take measurements in addition to stepping on the scale—even if your weight is staying constant, you are likely losing inches
- Strive to fit a certain size of clothing, rather than fixating on making a certain weight
- Keep a food journal to track everything that you eat and drink, and to avoid giving in to unhealthy temptations

- Increase your exercise regimen; as you lose weight, it takes longer for you to burn calories
- Mix up your workout routine by adding exercises such as strength training or a weekly aerobics class



Protecting Your Credit

Your credit history is vital to your future, making it crucial that it is accurate. When you apply for loans, credit cards or even apartments, your credit history affects whether or not you are approved and how high your interest rate is. Follow these guidelines to protect your credit score.

- Review your credit report regularly and know your credit score
- When using your debit card, run it as "credit"
- Avoid store credit cards
- Pay off outstanding debt
- Request a higher limit on your credit card, but don't spend it
- Freeze your credit if you don't need it
- Only give out your Social Security Number when absolutely necessary
- Ask your bank to report suspicious activity
- Create complicated passwords and PINs
- Develop a system to track all credit cards and accounts that you have

Put these tips into practice to keep your credit safe.

Winter Crisp Dessert

Only 1 tablespoon of margarine is used to make the crumb topping of this tart and tangy, cholesterol-free, low-sodium fruit dessert.

- ½ c. sugar
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. lemon peel, grated
- ¾ tsp. lemon juice
- 5 c. apples, sliced and with peels
- 1 c. cranberries
- 2/3 c. rolled oats
- 1/3 c. brown sugar, packed
- ¼ c. whole wheat flour
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. soft margarine, melted

In a medium bowl, combine sugar, flour and lemon peel; mix well. Add lemon juice, apples and cranberries; stir to mix. Spoon into a 6-cup baking dish. In a small bowl, combine oats, brown sugar, flour and cinnamon. Add melted margarine; stir to mix. Sprinkle over filling. Bake at 375 degrees Fahrenheit for 40-50 minutes or until filling is bubbly and top is brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 6 servings. Each serving provides 284 calories, 6g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol and 56mg sodium.

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov



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Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Holmes Murphy and Associates, Inc.

Thyroid Health

More important than you may think

About 20 million Americans suffer from thyroid disease and approximately 13 million more are currently undiagnosed today.

About the Thyroid

The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located at the base of the neck, just below the Adam's apple and right above the collarbone, surrounding the windpipe. The thyroid helps control the function of many of the body's organs, including the heart, brain, liver, kidneys and skin, but mostly helps to set the metabolism.

The two types of thyroid disease are hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism.

Hyperthyroidism

This disease refers to an overactive thyroid gland, which produces too much thyroid hormone. Symptoms include:

- Goiters
- Enlarged thyroid
- Rapid heart rate
- Nervous, anxious or irritable behavior
- Trembling hands
- Unexplained weight loss
- Heat intolerance
- Increased sweating
- Hair loss
- Diarrhea
- Sleeplessness

- Decreased menstrual flow or impaired fertility

Hypothyroidism

This is when the thyroid gland produces less than the normal amount of thyroid hormone, resulting in the decrease of many bodily functions. When the metabolism slows due to hypothyroidism, the following may occur:

- Fatigue
- Unexplained weight gain
- Dry skin and hair
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased cholesterol
- Intolerance to cold
- Constipation
- A heavier menstrual flow

Risk Factors

Risk factors for thyroid disease include:

- *Being female* – Women are five to eight times more likely to suffer from a thyroid disorder than men are.
- *Age* – The Thyroid Foundation of America recommends that women get annual thyroid

hormone level tests yearly starting at age 50; men should as well beginning at age 60.

- *A family history* – If the disease runs in the family, testing every five years after age 35 is recommended.
- *Pregnancy* – Thyroid conditions can arise after giving birth.

Treatment

Treatment for hyperthyroidism usually includes prescription drugs, radioactive iodine therapy and/or surgery. Hypothyroidism tends to be treated most effectively with a prescription thyroid replacement hormone.



Did You Know...?

As many as 15 percent of people diagnosed with depression are actually suffering from hyperthyroidism, which is the more common type of thyroid disease. It is diagnosed with a simple blood test.