

# Healthy New Year's Resolutions

January 2019

*See your health care provider at least annually and discuss your health related goals and request recommendations on how to achieve them.*

## Key Points:

- Be good to yourself, self-care is imperative for good health!
- Think "small steps"
- If you "slip" don't give up, you can start fresh every morning
- Make your goals measurable and attainable

## Examples of health related goals which could improve your quality of life:

### 1. Stay connected

- Keep in touch with family and friends
- Join a group – book club, yoga, support group etc.

### 2. Decrease stress

- Identify stressors and the symptoms you experience in high stress situations
- Find an outlet for your stress (i.e. talking with a friend, meditation, mindfulness, a short break, gentle exercise etc.)
- Important: You don't have to "do it alone". Ask your HCP for a referral to a counselor/therapist to support you in your goal to decrease and/or deal with your stress

### 3. Exercise

- Get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity.
- Go for a walk – the rail trail, around the mall etc. Try and do a few more steps each day. Ask a friend to join you or join a walking group.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Do something you enjoy, you are more likely to continue this type of activity than trying to do something that you don't like to do

### 4. Eat well

- Focus on making healthy food and beverage choices from all five food groups including fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods and dairy to get the nutrients you need
- Eat the right amount of calories based on your age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity level
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water and other fluids a day
- Don't skip breakfast- a good breakfast gives you energy, as well as vitamins and minerals

- Make small changes to create a healthier lifestyle as opposed to diets, unless, your doctor or nutritionist has prescribed a specific diet for a medical condition.
- Building a healthier eating style reduces your risk of diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer

## 5. Sleep

- Healthy adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep per day
- Helpful tips:
  1. Limit daytime naps to 30 minutes
  2. Avoid stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine 4 to 6 hrs. before bedtime
  3. Exercise: As little as 10 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as walking or cycling, can drastically improve nighttime sleep quality. For the best night's sleep, most people should avoid strenuous workouts close to bedtime.
  4. Steer clear of food that can be disruptive right before sleep. Heavy or rich foods, fatty or fried meals, spicy dishes, citrus fruits, and carbonated drinks can trigger indigestion for some people.
  5. Ensure adequate exposure to natural light. Exposure to sunlight during the day, as well as darkness at night, helps to maintain a healthy sleep-wake cycle.
  6. Establish a regular-bedtime routine. A regular nightly routine helps the body recognize that it is bedtime.
  7. Make the sleep environment pleasant and relaxing – a cool room, comfortable bedding, soft lights, etc.

## 6. Stop Smoking

- Speak with your HCP about the options available to help you with this goal, such as patches, nicotine gum, hypnosis etc.
- Contact the American Cancer Society and American Lung Association for smoking cessation support groups
- Avoid triggers (i.e. places where people are smoking, friends who smoke, etc.)

## 7. Reduce Alcohol Intake

- If you wish to stop drinking:
  - Discuss with your HCP for guidance
  - Look into support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
  - Avoid places where people drink

\*This content is not intended to be a substitute for **professional medical** advice, please contact your health care provider for more information.