



## **Make Healthy Eating Happen This Year**

Do you vow every year to make changes in your eating habits and your family's? Yet every year you get to January and it is still on the resolution list again. **This year make it different...actually make those changes!** Change can occur when you decide you are ready to truly make a change, have a set plan, and have accountability measures in place. Here are a few tips on how to make this year into the year you start eating healthier.

1. **FIRST.** Write a mission statement or your WHY statement...ok this may sound corny but it can really help you figure out your motivation. An example of a Why statement might be... To eat as healthy as I can and exercise regularly in order to have more energy for my family.

2. **SECOND.** Write one new, small, specific, measurable goal every one to two weeks. This is very important...even if you skip the mission statement you have to do this to be successful! Making small changes, slowly will allow these changes to become habit without getting overwhelmed, and you will set yourself up for success rather than failure.

Example of an incorrectly written goal: I will eat better this week. This goal is vague and not measurable.

Example of a correctly written goal: I will eat three servings of vegetables everyday.

Some other great goal ideas:

I will eat/order out one time per week.

I will take lunch to work three days a week.

I will read two nutrition articles per week.

As well-known motivational speaker Zig Ziglar says,  
"A goal properly set is halfway reached."

3. **THIRD.** After writing your goal for the week then write five to ten ways you are going to achieve that goal. So for my goal to eat 3 servings of vegetables everyday, my list of ways to achieve that goal would be 1) buy vegetables and cut them up as soon as I bring them home from the store 2) use a meal planning website to help plan dinners 3) find new recipes for vegetables 4) pack vegetables with lunch everyday 5) buy frozen vegetables to have on hand if short on time or run out of fresh 6) keep a chart to track fruit and vegetable intake.

4. **POSITIVE SUPPORT.** Surround yourself with people who like to eat healthy and workout. It is much easier to order healthy when you go to lunch with co-workers who also eat healthy. Or remember that people may be looking to you for inspiration to eat healthy...so be a role model for them. This is especially important if you are a parent, your kids are watching everything that you do (including eating and exercise!)
5. **ACCOUNTABILITY IS KEY!!!** Who (or what) you find to be accountable to is up to you- just find something- more than one is even better! With all the cyber and virtual technology these days this has gotten even easier. So meet with a nutritionist (face-to-face or virtually), exchange food and/or exercise logs with a friend, find an exercise partner or hire a personal trainer, use on-line food journals. There is even a new tool that enables you to take pictures of your meals with your phone, send it to a nutritionist and get feedback on your meals...talk about accountability, it is like a nutritionist eating with you at every meal!
6. **POSITIVE ATTITUDE.** It is amazing what you can do when you have a more positive outlook. Instead of saying, "I have to work out" say "I get to work out and feel better".
7. **INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE.** Find an inspiring or motivating quote or quotes that really speak to you and hang it in a place you will see it all the time... pretty soon you will have it memorized and it will really stick with you! Here are a few to get you thinking...
  - "If you always do what you have always done, then you will always get what you have always got." -Anthony Robbins
  - "If we don't start, it's certain we can't arrive." -Zig Ziglar
  - "If it is important to you, you will find a way. If not, you'll find an excuse." -Unknown
  - "Suffer the pain of discipline or suffer the pain of regret!" – Unknown
8. **NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE.** Often the more we know about a subject, the more likely we are to pay attention to it. Since I don't know or understand the rules of football, I lose interest watching a football game quickly. However, I played tennis and know all the rules and really understand the game, so a tennis match is very interesting for me to watch. The same goes for nutrition knowledge. The more we know about how healthy foods will positively effect our body and how unhealthy foods will negatively impact our health, the greater the chance that we will choose healthy food the majority of the time. Just remember to check out the validity of the source of your nutrition information. There is plenty of great information out there but there is still misinformation as well.
9. **REWARD YOURSELF.** Rewarding ourselves when we reach goals is a great motivator. For example you could treat yourself to a manicure and pedicure if you reach your goals for a month. Just be sure to make rewards non-food related.

Jeanne B. McDaniel, MS, RD/LD, CSP  
Specializing in Pediatrics and Women's Health  
404-725-7101  
[www.the-nutrition-source.com](http://www.the-nutrition-source.com)  
[thenutritionsource@me.com](mailto:thenutritionsource@me.com)