



The Health Collaborative

## Fit City Realistic Resolution Guide

**The #1 New Year's Resolution is to lose weight.**  
**But before you try something drastic, we ask you to consider:**  
**The Plan** – healthy resolutions for the whole year presented by  
**The American Council on Exercise®**

**The Activities** – fitness and nutrition activities to get you started  
**The Resources** – more information to help you reach your goal



**Take small steps:** Simply establishing the goal of leading a healthy lifestyle should make you feel good about yourself. To make that goal more attainable, come up with small goals you know you can meet each day to help keep yourself feeling positive. If your goals are too large, you may get caught up in them and feel disappointed when you do not see immediate results. Small behavior-change plans are easier to stick to than vague resolutions like "I will lose 10 pounds." If your resolution is too large, add a plan of action that will guide you toward your goal. Rather than "I will exercise more," try "I will go for a walk at lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays and work out in the gym Mondays and Fridays." This way you can feel a sense of accomplishment every day.

**Change for yourself:** Any goals that you set should come from a sincere desire to change for yourself. Research has shown that negative feelings are a frequent cause of relapse in behavior-change programs, and resolutions that feel like punishment can cause negative feelings. Don't decide to change to please anyone other than yourself. And remember, resolutions are an opportunity for you to look forward in a positive way rather than to punish yourself for past behaviors.



**Be creative:** Perhaps you can find ways to exercise while also accomplishing other goals. Try walking to do errands that are in close proximity to your home or office. Maybe you need to spend more time with your family. Try walking with a family member or bringing your children along on bikes while you walk or jog. If your goal is to make new friends, try taking classes where you will meet other people who share your same exercise interests.

**Be realistic:** Be sure that your plan of action is realistic. Plan to work out at times when it is convenient for you. If you are not a morning person, do not plan to work out early in the morning or you'll just be setting yourself up for failure. Set goals at reasonable heights so that you can reach them without feeling overwhelmed. The only way your goal is going to become reality is if you believe in it and, most of all, if you believe in yourself. It may help you reinforce your goal if you can find a realistic role model who is actually living your goal. If they can do it, so can you!



**Anticipate roadblocks and reward yourself for successes:** If things like weather and illness will prevent you from sticking to your plan, make alternate plans for situations that you cannot avoid. Most importantly, do not let a missed day or two throw you completely off target. Instead, do your best to get back on track as quickly as possible, which should not be extremely difficult if you have set appropriate goals. Try to find a new way to reward yourself when you meet your smaller goals.

**Build a support system:** Get the support of your family, friends and co-workers. If your resolution involves quitting a serious addiction like smoking, drinking or an eating disorder, get professional help and join a support group if possible. Remember that you are your best supporter. You are trying to improve your own health. Keep in mind that a well-thought-out resolution can be a useful tool to help you live your life the best way possible, starting from the inside. See TEAMS information on page 2.

