



The Sheridan Press photo illustration/Michael Sullivan

Many people start the new year with resolutions to eat better and exercise more.

New Year's nutrition

• YMCA associate director advises keeping realistic goals

By Daniel Fischer

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Diane Ballek, associate executive director at the Sheridan County YMCA and a certified personal trainer, said less ambitious fitness goals can actually produce greater results.

"You've got to set realistic goals," she said. "The biggest mistake people have is that their goals are just way too high."

Shedding 30 pounds in three months or going from no fitness program to an hour-long, five-day-per-week program might not be achievable, Ballek said. Instead, be content with more modest results, such as losing 2 pounds in a month.

"You want to start slow and start small," she said.

Having unmet overly lofty expectations can, in the end, lead to no positive results at all. "When (people) can't succeed," Ballek said, "they're going to quit altogether."

If you decide to embark on a fitness program, Ballek suggests meeting with a personal trainer for a baseline fitness assessment. She said it can be motivating to compare where you were when you started working out and where you are later.

Ballek said the support of others is important when trying to get fit. That can mean connections with staff or other members at your local fitness facility.

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Registered dietitian says stay away from all-or-nothing approach

By Daniel Fischer

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Megan Brekke, registered dietitian at Sheridan Memorial Hospital, said the two biggest nutrition pitfalls are fad diets and an all-or-nothing approach to healthy eating.

"I think one thing people tend to do is take an all-or-nothing approach. If you have a setback, then all is lost," Brekke said. "Of course fad diets never work. They never work long-term."

Brekke recommends day-by-day, meal-by-meal changes that make good nutrition a habit.

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Approach

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"Just keep making those choices until you don't have to think about it anymore," she advised.

She said keeping a food log can help.

"You really don't think about how much you eat until you write it down," she said. "It really helps to have it in writing so you can see where you're at and where you need to go."

A diet log contrasts with what Brekke calls mindless eating — "eating just because it's there" — those enticing treats and sweets that are left sitting out at work, for instance.

"If you're starving, eat. But be a mindful eater," she said. "If you're not hungry, don't eat."

Brekke recommends adding a fruit or vegetable at every meal and swapping unhealthy choices for healthier ones. Exchange regular chips for baked chips — or nix the chips altogether and have a banana.

Eat the healthier version of certain foods: light mayonnaise instead of regular, whole-grain bread instead of white bread, or water or milk instead of soda. Or eat the food you love in small-

er portions: half a dessert rather than a whole dessert.

Brekke recommends plenty of water. Before eating anything when you feel hungry, drink a glass of water. Replace soda with water; for regular soda drinkers, she said, cutting soda for a year is the calorie equivalent of losing 13 pounds.

Focus on getting more nutrients.

"Making small changes, trying to add more nutrients into your diet is the best thing you can do," Brekke said.

She recommends moderation over perfectionism.

"You can eat anything," she said. "It's just all about how much you eat."

"I think (one) should look at it more as eating healthier," she added, when it comes to nutrition. "I think the rest will just fall into place."

Develop a healthy relationship with food, Brekke suggested. "Food's not the enemy."

She said it's all right to have junk food some of the time — it doesn't mean you fell off the wagon.

"Eat healthy most of the time," she said. "No one can eat healthy 100 percent of the time."

Diabetes

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However, this is not as easy as it sounds. There are several ways to help maintain blood glucose control depending on what type of diabetes an individual has.

Individuals with type 1 diabetes are not able to produce insulin and will need to take insulin shots or use an insulin pump to help their body manage glucose.

This type of diabetes is usually an autoimmune disease, meaning our own immune cells are acting against our ability to produce insulin, and is typically diagnosed in early adolescence.

Those with type 2 diabetes are still able to make enough insulin, but their cells have become resistant to its effects. This type accounts for 90-95 percent of all diabetes cases.

A particular cause hasn't been identified, but risk factors include family history, age, physical inactivity, and obesity.

While you don't have much control over your family history or age, staying active and maintaining a healthy weight are two good ways to decrease your chances for developing type 2 diabetes.

In addition, many type 2 diabetics can see big improvements with exercise, weight loss (if they are overweight), and dietary control.

Exercise helps your body to regulate blood glucose without needing insulin, and eating properly can help you control the amount of glucose you get from food (typically by managing your carbohydrate intake).

However, even with the help of diet and exercise, many individuals will still require medication to properly control their condition. While careful attention is necessary, all diabetics can live long and healthy lives if they manage their condition properly.

Plans for presenting Dining with Diabetes in Wyoming, a diabetes management educational program, are under way. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail me or contact your local Extension office.

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Goals

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Participating in a group fitness program can provide people to hold you accountable, she said. Just buying a stationary bike or treadmill for your home might not be helpful, because you lack others to motivate you.

Family members are important in pursuing fitness, Ballek said. They can help you to determine your fitness goals, and families can combine spending time together and getting fit by swimming or even playing in the snow as a group.

Ballek emphasized that fitness goes beyond just dumbbells and treadmills.

"Some people think of fitness as just being physically fit," she said.

However, she said emotional fitness with an ability to manage stress and relationships with other people is also important. She said obesity is not only based on one's level of physical activity, but it can also be caused by overeating brought on by stress.

Ballek said 30 minutes every day of moderate activity can be hard for some people to fit in. But fitness, she said, can be incorporated into your day in manageable 10-minute intervals.

Take the stairs or five- to 10-minute walking breaks at work. Even an everyday activity like cleaning house can have benefits if you work at a brisk pace.

"As long as you act as briskly during those three 10-minute intervals as you do during the same 30 minutes, you can get the same benefits out of it," Ballek said. "It's pretty easy to get started that way and can be just as effective."

New Year

This New Year's Eve, you may choose to join the million or so people hunkering down in Times Square to watch that 1,070-pound, 6-foot-diameter Waterford crystal ball drop at midnight. You may hobnob with revelers in Las Vegas, where the infamous "strip"



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is closed to traffic for the evening and the party takes to the streets. You may slurp a Hurricane, that potent New Orleans concoction, on Bourbon Street in the French

Quarter. Or you may throw caution to the winds, make a radical choice and — stay home.

Staying home on New Year's doesn't make you a stick-in-the-mud. You can, with just a bit of planning, ring in 2009 in style in the comfort of your own digs. Whether it's just you and your significant other, a cozy party for a few friends or a large-ish bash, you just need to remember this: On New Year's Eve, it's all about the bubbly.

Now, if you take into account the cost of a couple of plane tickets to Vegas, it might seem like a bargain to spend \$700 or so on a bottle of Krug Clos du Mesnil, a vintage champagne that Forbes magazine has counted as among the world's most expensive. Or you could buy a case of \$3-a-bottle sparkling stuff and hand out aspirin as party favors. The recommended path is somewhere in the middle.

Champagne, as you probably know, comes to us from the Champagne region of France (about 90 miles northeast of Paris). It requires a time- and labor-intensive, two-stage fermentation (the ballyhooed "Champagne Method") in which the natural carbon dioxide is trapped in the bottle. The advances in

Better health a resolution for many

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As people contemplate their resolutions for 2009, better health is near the top of the list for many.

According to a survey released Dec. 18 by Salt Lake City-based FranklinCovey Products involving 527 FranklinCovey Products customers, of the top 10 New Year's resolutions for 2009, losing weight was ranked second, establishing a healthy habit, including exercise, was third, and breaking an unhealthy habit such as overeating was fourth.

Of course, the ability to keep these resolutions does not always equal the willingness to make them.

The survey found that by the end of January, one-third of the respondents will likely break their resolutions. By the time 2009 is three months old, according to the survey, more than 75 percent of respondents will have broken their resolutions.

However, in this section Diane Ballek, associate executive director at the Sheridan County YMCA, and Megan Brekke, registered dietitian at Sheridan Memorial Hospital, give tips not only for those making a resolution, but also for anyone seeking better fitness and nutrition in 2009.