

Rescue Your Resolutions



CHALLENGE
Take action to achieve your wellness goals

Requirements to complete this Health Challenge™

1. Read "Rescue Your Resolutions."
2. Take action to work on your health and wellness goals on at least 22 days this month.
3. Keep a record of your completed challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



Melinda Jensen: BEFORE

"You're overweight," the doctor told Oregon resident Melinda Jensen. It was the last week of December one year ago. The mother of three little kids had been putting off a routine checkup for months. Why? She dreaded hearing those words from the doctor.

"Your blood pressure is high, and so is your blood sugar," the doctor continued. "We can put you on a number of medications, or you can try to work off the weight with diet and exercise to lower these numbers."

Until now, Jensen had a long list of excuses for packing on the pounds. Extra weight she gained during three pregnancies, a busy schedule, and snacking to manage stress. But when the doctor gave her the news about her weight and her health, she was ready to change.



Melinda Jensen: AFTER

"I set a goal to lose 60 pounds in a year," says Jensen. "And I wanted to do it by eating healthier and getting more exercise."

How much do you know about healthy habits to reach your goals? Take this quiz to find out.

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1. Sleeping 7 to 8 hours a night can help prevent weight gain and other health problems.
2. The best way to curb a sugar craving is to gradually cut back on sweet treats and drinks by eating healthier foods.
3. Losing 3 to 4 pounds per week is a healthy weight loss goal.
4. The minimum amount of exercise recommended for good health is at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week, plus strength training exercises on at least two days a week.
5. If you want to quit smoking a combination of nicotine replacement, behavior changes, and a support group works best.

You've set a goal or made a New Year's resolution to better your health. Good for you! Do you know what you need to do to be successful? Get enough sleep. Have healthy eating habits. Be active. Make sure your goals are realistic (Losing 1 to 2 pounds is a healthy weight-loss goal.). Get support from others and from professionals. They can help you stick with it, or get back on track.

Answers: 1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. True.

Did you wake up on New Year's Day determined to lose weight, be more active, eat healthier, quit smoking, or get out of debt? You're not alone. About half of all adults make New Year's resolutions. But few turn those good intentions into life-changing success.

Studies show that 36 percent of people who set goals throw in the towel and go back to old habits in the first month. Sound familiar? It doesn't have to be that way. Take the month-long challenge to *Rescue Your Resolutions*.

SMART Goals Improve Results

When Jensen committed to losing 60 pounds in a year, she didn't spend a lot of time worrying about that big number afterwards. Instead, she followed a proven plan using SMART goals to tip the scale in the right direction.



S.M.A.R.T Health Action Plan worksheet
tinyurl.com/zk5rfez

If you've been struggling with your New Year's resolutions to get healthy, now is a good time to take a closer look at your plan. Your SMART goals should be:

| Specific | Measurable | Action-Oriented | Reasonable | Time-Bound |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Define your goal with as much detail as you can. Write it down. | You need a way to measure your efforts. Keep a daily or weekly record of things related to your goal, like sleep, calories, weight, and workouts. Use a logbook or try a mobile app. | To achieve any goal, you need to take action. Explain what you will do. Break down your goal into action steps you can take. | Set goals you can realistically accomplish in a few weeks or months. | Set time expectations. Have a start date and finish date by which you expect to reach your goal. This gives you a clear target to work toward. |

Mind Over Matter

A big part of the challenge with keeping resolutions is all in your head. Lack of time tops the list as the number one reason people give for not following through with a goal to get healthy. But it's really just an excuse. Most people have time. Check out these facts about decision making, time management, and developing healthy habits.

| | |
|---------|---|
| 7 | Times a smoker tries before quitting for good |
| 11 | Hours the typical adult American spends sitting per day |
| 34 | Hours spent watching TV in an average week |
| 66 | Days it takes to develop a healthy habit |
| 200 | Decisions you make about food each day |
| 5,000 | Advertising messages you see in a day |
| 35,000 | Choices you make each day |
| 233,000 | Fast-food restaurants in the U.S. |

Ways to quit smoking
tinyurl.com/z7s5wn4

Weight-loss strategies for success
tinyurl.com/7outrho

How to break the sugar habit
tinyurl.com/znqjzm

One Day at a Time

10 Ways to Rescue Your Resolutions

You may have had a little trouble sticking to your resolutions in January. But that doesn't mean it's a lost cause. Here are 10 ways to improve your efforts to make positive changes:

- 1. Write it down.** Studies show that people who write down their resolutions are 10 times more likely to succeed than those who don't.
- 2. Take baby steps.** It's tough to change old habits overnight, so start small. Break your goal down into baby steps and take it one day at a time.
- 3. Find a role model.** Find someone who has already achieved your goal and model their behavior.
- 4. Sleep on it.** Your brain needs 7 to 8 hours of rest to help control impulsive behavior.
- 5. Limit stress.** Too much stress makes your brain focus on short-term rewards instead of your big-picture goal. Take a walk, get some exercise, or practice deep breathing to keep stress levels down.
- 6. Eat healthy.** The average person makes over 200 food choices a day. Healthy foods (fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, legumes, whole grains) feed your brain and improve willpower.
- 7. Exercise willpower.** It takes practice to turn good intentions into healthy habits. At first it's hard, and you might mess up. But keep trying, and making the right choice gets easier.
- 8. Avoid procrastination.** Adopt a do-it-now approach to working toward your goal. Even small steps will get you closer to your goal than doing nothing.
- 9. Reward progress.** Choose healthy rewards for completing small goals. This can help you stay motivated to stick with your plan.
- 10. Visualize success.** Visualize achieving your goal. Imagine the day you achieve your goal weight or give up cigarettes for good. Think about how you'll feel, how you'll celebrate, and how it will change your life.

A few days after her doctor's appointment, Jensen turned the calendar over to January 1. She made up her mind to lose weight one day at a time. She started with walking and eating healthier. She lost a few pounds. This motivated her to keep going. She finished a half-marathon. She cooked more meals at home. She ate healthier snacks. She reached her goal within a year, and so can you.

Take another look at your health and wellness goals for the year. If you've strayed from your plan a little since January 1, that's OK. Use this challenge to get back on track. You'll be glad you did.

Sources: American Cancer Society.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.; European Journal of Social Psychology.; Harvard School of Public Health; Journal of Clinical Psychology.; National Institutes of Health.; Pew Research Center.; Stanford University.





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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you take action to work on your health and wellness goals.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices you take to work on your health and wellness goals.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take action to achieve your health and wellness goals. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

| MONTH: | | | | | | | HC = Health Challenge™ | ex. min. = exercise minutes |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | Weight & weekly summary | |
| HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | HC [] ex. min. _____ | | |
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_____ Number of days this month I took action to work on my health and wellness goals.

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____