

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.

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Set a Goal for Improvement

Most of us could use a little improvement when it comes to our health habits. Perhaps we could eat better, exercise more, or get some long-delayed medical screening. To go beyond wishing or hoping to actual accomplishment takes a little effort on our part. Setting and working toward a specific goal is a proven way to accomplish what we want.

- ▶ Keep it positive. Make goals something to achieve rather than something to avoid.
- ▶ Be honest with yourself. Be sure this goal is actually important to you, that you are not trying solely to please your spouse, friend or doctor.
- ▶ Know where you are now so you can set a reasonable goal for yourself. This may mean observing yourself for a week to see what your habits actually are.
- ▶ Be as specific as you can be when setting a goal. General goals are less likely to be reached.
- ▶ Put a timeframe into your goal. We all seem to do better when we have a deadline.
- ▶ Develop your goal in a step-wise fashion with short-term, easy to reach intermediate goals.
- ▶ Once you have met a short term goal, congratulate yourself and move on to another short term goal that will help you achieve your overall goal.

Here are a couple of examples of goals which meet the criteria noted above.

Example one

Long term goal: to eat in a healthier way. After writing down everything I eat for a week, I can see that I don't eat much fruit.

Short term goal: I'll start by eating a piece of fruit for mid-morning snack at least three days a week at work.

Steps to accomplish this goal:

1. Buy three pieces of fruit at the grocery store when shopping for this week's groceries.
2. Take the fruit with me to work the next day.

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Dear Readers,

The first month of a new year is a wonderful opportunity to make a fresh start. That is what we are doing with this issue of Celebrate! A Healthy You. After seven years of doing something pretty much the same way, we decided it was time for a new look.


Some readers have been encouraging us to shorten Celebrate to one page so we are giving that format a try. This space reduction means we've cut some long-standing features, but kept those which have been most popular.

Our commitment remains to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body by writing in a positive manner. Please bear with us as we fine tune our new look over the next few months. Do let us know what you think about the changes. As usual, there will be a survey sent with the newsletter later in the year, but in the meantime, don't hesitate to write, call or fax with your thoughts. Contact information is still on page one.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy 2008!

Linda

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Celebrate! A Healthy You

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Menu of the Month

Soup suppers are terrific for January. Warm, nourishing soups can fit beautifully into a healthy eating pattern which so many of us resolve to begin at the New Year. Italian Wedding Minestrone Soup is so hearty you won't notice it is a vegetarian recipe, especially if served with sliced or shredded cheese. Canned beans and tomatoes and frozen vegetables make it quick to fix. Draining and rinsing the beans keeps sodium levels reasonable. Serve Italian Wedding Minestrone Soup with sliced or shredded cheese, cornbread, baked apples and milk.

Italian Wedding Minestrone Soup

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 or 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 14 ½-ounce cans (3 ½ cups) low sodium chicken broth
- 1 14 ½ -ounce can stewed tomatoes or diced tomatoes



- 1 14 ½ -ounce can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 10-ounce package frozen vegetables or 1 ¼ cups fresh vegetables, peeled and chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, oregano or Italian seasoning
- ½ cup uncooked pasta such as rotini, macaroni or small shells

Heat olive oil in large saucepan. Sauté onion and garlic until onion is translucent. Add broth, tomatoes, beans, frozen or chopped vegetables and seasonings. Stir to mix.

Bring to boil on medium-high heat. Stir in pasta. Reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer about 20 minutes or until the pasta is tender.

Makes 8 servings of 1 cup each. Nutrition information per serving: 139 calories, 7g protein, 2g fat, 23g carbohydrate, 422mg sodium.

Just Stand Up!

Many of us cite our busy lives as reasons why we don't exercise. The advice of some researchers at the University of Missouri is to just stand up.



Marc Hamilton, associate professor of biomedical sciences and his colleagues hope to encourage people to be more active in their daily routines. They specifically suggest performing household chores or office tasks like typing on the computer while standing. Hamilton notes that both Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson used standing desks. Standing and pacing while talking on the phone, or standing to watch a child's ballgame are other examples cited by Hamilton.

Through their research, Hamilton and colleagues are looking at the way the body uses fat. Their findings indicate that using leg muscles to stand or move about increases the body's ability to use stored fat for fuel. The opposite is also true—that the more we sit, the less fat we use. This supports earlier research that found people who are "jigglers" or who tend to tap their feet or jiggle their knees are be more active even when doing sedentary activities and are less likely to have difficulty maintaining a healthy weight than those of us who sit quietly.

Perhaps it is time to reevaluate some of our 'labor saving' devices and look for ways to add back some physical activity into our daily lives.

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- Put up reminder messages at work station to eat fruit at break.
- Eat fruit at break when I am hungry.

Example two

Long term goal: to get more exercise.

Short term goal: to walk at least three times per week.

Steps to accomplish this goal:

- Determine when I can fit walking into my regular routine. If I walk right after getting up in the morning, I am more likely to do it before other tasks interfere.
- Set out exercise clothes the night before as a reminder to walk this week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Set alarm half hour earlier on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday nights.
- Tell spouse of plan and ask for support (or company!).
- Walk on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

What health habit do you want to improve? What steps can you take today to start working toward your goal?

Words to Consider

"I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself." — Mikhail Baryshnikov