

January 4, 2013

THUMBS Up

HEALTH



STARTING THE YEAR OFF RIGHT

We all love a new year. It almost seems like we can start all over, finally become that wonderful, productive, healthy, happy person we've always wanted to be. The trouble is, the enthusiasm to make changes, especially with exercise and diet, tends to fade once we realize we can't change everything overnight. If you want to make lasting changes, there are three things you can do to make your resolutions work all year long: Adjust your attitude, change your lifestyle and come up with a plan for success.

Adjust Your Attitude

If you have the wrong attitude about fitness, you're already setting yourself up for failure. Most people look at exercise as:

- Punishment for bad eating
- An obligation
- Painful
- Time consuming
- Impossible to sustain over a long period of time
- Boring

If any of these sound familiar, how long do you think you'll stick with your program? Nobody wants to do something painful, boring or obligatory. Before you throw yourself into weight loss, talk out your attitudes about exercise and figure out whether these attitudes are true or just lies you've been telling yourself for years. Then, try a different perspective and look at exercise as:

- A break from a stressful workday
- A way to boost energy and mood
- The only time you'll have to yourself all day
- A chance to get totally physical and let your mind rest
- A chance to reward your body for working so hard
- A way to improve your quality of life immediately

And here are some more key points about exercise that you must understand:

1. **Willpower won't work.** Willpower is for short-term success. Long-term success requires planning, discipline and finding ways to motivate yourself every day.

Continued on next page



THUMBS Up HEALTH

2. **Motivation will not magically happen.** What motivates you will change from day to day. You have to recommit to your goals each day, tweak them to fit changes in your lifestyle and attitude and find new ways to motivate yourself over the course of your life.
3. **You will not always want to exercise and eat healthy.** Even the most committed exerciser doesn't always want to do it. Know that you will have to work on it every day.
4. **Diets don't work.** Stop wasting your time following someone else's plan for you. Make your own plan based on realistic changes--if you can't follow your chosen diet for the rest of your life, you're wasting precious time.

Your next step is to adjust your lifestyle so you have the best chance of success.

Adjust Your Lifestyle

The facts about being overweight:

- You can't be overweight unless your lifestyle is set up to encourage it.
- You can't be overweight if you haven't allowed yourself to eat too much.
- You can't be overweight if you've made a daily schedule that doesn't allow time for exercise.

Never forget that losing weight and maintaining that weight loss is a lifetime prospect. You will never stop working to maintain your fitness and weight. So, before you start that same old diet or exercise program, ask yourself this question: Can I sustain this diet for the long term? Is this exercise program something I can do every day?

Once you recognize the gravity of permanently losing weight, you'll need to change your lifestyle to accommodate this goal.

- **Figure out your bad habits.** Keep a food/activity journal for an entire week. Do it without judgment or shame--you're simply trying to figure out what you're doing every day that may be hurting your weight loss goals.
- **Replace those bad habits, one at a time, with different habits.** Experts know that you can't break bad habits without forming new ones. If you take away your daily Egg McMuffin and don't replace it with something else you'll drift right back into the old McDonald's habit.

This may sound simplistic, and it is. Giving up something yummy for something healthy isn't easy. You have to change your environment to make it impossible to have or even want that Egg McMuffin. Get started with these ideas:

- Decide what you'll eat instead of fast food. Stock up on breakfast foods you like, keep meal replacement bars in the car or try healthy fruit shakes or smoothies.
- Eat before you get in the car so you won't be starving and, therefore, tempted to hit the drive thru.
- Change your driving route to work so you don't even pass by McDonald's.
- Don't carry cash in the car (even if you DO have the urge to indulge, you won't be able to), write down your weight loss goal and tape it to your steering wheel or your glove compartment so, when you're

reaching for your wallet, you're immediately reminded your goals.

Your best chance at making your resolutions last is to make a plan for success. A few simple steps taken ahead of time can save you time and energy.

Make a Plan

You've figured out how to change your bad eating habits by replacing them with good ones and you've learned to create an environment that doesn't allow those bad habits to exist. Now, you need to make a plan for what you really want.

Set Your Goals

Write down specific goals you have (not just 'I want to lose weight.'). List everything, for example:

- How much weight you want to lose. Make sure the amount of weight you want to lose is reasonable for your height and frame. This Ideal Weight Calculator will give you a starting point for setting your goals.
- A target date to reach your goals. Make sure you've given yourself a reasonable time to reach that goal - (a safe bet would be to lose a pound a week)
- Why you want to lose this weight (i.e., I want to look good in a bathing suit for summer)
- What you think will happen if you reach your goal
- How you'll maintain your weight loss once you reach your goal (remember, it's a lifetime thing--even when you reach your goal, you can't quit!)

For more, check out [Setting Realistic Fitness Goals](#) or [How to Set Weight Loss Goals](#) to make sure you're setting goals you can really reach.

Ensure Your Success

Success involves using every resource you have to keep you going. Do whatever it takes to be consistent including:

- Enlist all family members to get involved. If everyone eats healthy, you won't have to fight to avoid that bag of chips your spouse munches on every night
- Hire a personal trainer
- Get a friend to exercise with you
- Take time every week to schedule your exercise routines
- Keep a workout bag packed so you don't have to scramble for your gear
- Keep a fitness journal to track your workouts and progress
- Reward yourself often with massages, new clothes or a vacation
- Change your program every 6 weeks to avoid plateaus
- Re-visit your goals every six months and gauge your progress. If you're not reaching your goals, maybe you should change them to something more accessible

The important thing to remember is that losing weight requires that you change your lifestyle. You have to change the way you think about exercise and eating, change the way you schedule your day and how you prioritize your tasks. It's easy to lose a few pounds, but it's hard to keep them off for good. Being prepared for what's ahead is your first step in the right direction.



RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Grilled Fajita Burgers

Ingredients

- 8 ounces uncooked ground turkey breast or 90 percent or higher lean ground beef
- 1/4 cup purchased salsa
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Dash salt
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced sweet onion (such as Vidalia or Maui Maui)
- 1/2 of a medium red sweet pepper, thinly sliced (1/2 cup)
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 2 purchased tostada shells
- 1/4 of a medium avocado, seeded, peeled, and sliced or chopped

Cooking Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, combine turkey, salsa, cumin, black pepper, and salt. Mix well. Shape into two 1/2-inch-thick patties. Fold a 24x12-inch piece of heavy-duty foil in half to make a 12-inch square. Place onion and sweet pepper in center of foil; drizzle with oil. Bring up two opposite edges of foil and seal with a double fold. Fold remaining edges together to completely enclose the vegetables, leaving space for steam to build.*
2. For a charcoal grill, place vegetable packet and patties on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium heat. Grill for 10 to 13 minutes or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the side of each patty registers 165 degrees F for turkey or 160 degrees F for beef and vegetables are tender, turning once halfway through grilling. (For a gas grill, preheat grill. Reduce heat to medium. Place packet and patties on grill rack over heat. Cover and grill as above.)
3. Serve grilled patties on tostada shells. Top with vegetables and avocado.

*Test Kitchen Tip:

Instead of encasing the vegetables in foil, the pepper and onion mixture may be cooked in a skillet on the side burner of the grill or on the range top. In a covered medium skillet, cook onion and red pepper slices in hot oil over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover and cook about 3 minutes more or until pepper is very tender and onion is golden brown, stirring occasionally.

NUTRITION ANALYSIS

(per serving)

Calories: 285	Fat: 10 g
Saturated Fat: 1 g	Monounsaturated Fat: 4 g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g	Sodium: 430 mg
Cholesterol: 55 mg	Fiber: 5 g
Carbohydrates: 20 g	Protein: 29 g
Sugars: 5 g	

DIETARY EXCHANGES

- 1 Vegetables
- 1 Starch
- 4 Lean Meat
- 1 Fat