

It's Time for a NEW YOU!

The Top Resolutions to improve your health and create a more vibrant you

No diets. Just make good food choices. Here's how:

- ✓ *Choose organic over non-organic foods*
- ✓ *Avoid trans fats and saturated fats* (i.e. donuts, fried foods...etc)
- ✓ *Eat lean proteins* (e.g. fish, wild game, poultry, egg whites, tofu, legume)
- ✓ *Fill up on fruits and vegetables* (consume between 8 and 10 servings per day)
- ✓ *Consume carbohydrates in the form of whole grains and fiber* (avoid bleached flour products)
- ✓ *Pick foods lower on the Glycemic Index/Glycemic load charts:*
 - choose berries over bananas, sweet potatoes over regular white potatoes
 - consume some protein along with carbohydrates rather than just eating the carbohydrates, e.g. almond nut butter with apples
 - choose brown rice over white rice
- ✓ *Add foods high in antioxidants to your choices - get colorful!* Free radicals are blamed not only for making us look old but also for making us fat! Load up on the colorful antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables
- ✓ *Manage stress!* Stress makes us fat! Stressful situations cause cravings for carb-rich foods while our hormones ramp up fat storage in our bodies. Make time for stress relief, e.g. try yoga, or just go out and have some fun!
- ✓ *Sleep more, lose more.* Lack of sleep causes the release of the ghrelin hormones, which triggers hunger. Hence, we think we're hungry when we're not.
- ✓ *Be active - exercise!*

Exercise.

All exercise routines should consist of weight-resistance, cardio, and flexibility. Weight-resistance can include the usual machines, bands, and free-weights in local gyms. Swimming is an excellent choice as well.

Weight-resistance: Here are four of my personal favorites on weight-resistance that you can perform anywhere:

- 1) **Squats** - works your glutes, quads, hamstrings, and calves all at once.
Form: Feet hip-width apart, toes pointing straight ahead or slightly angled outward. Sit back on your tailbone, not down, by keeping your torso straight and your abs pulled in tight. Keep knees over your toes and lower from hip to 90 degrees (thighs parallel to floor)
- 2) **Push-ups** - these work your chest, shoulders, triceps, back, and abs.
Form: Position face down on the floor balancing on your toes (or knees) and hands - plank-style. Position hands slightly stacked over your shoulders, body in a straight line - buttocks leveled and definitely no sagging in the abdomen area. Lower your arms to the floor and push back up, while keeping your body straight and abs pulled in tight. Let me know when you're able to do one-arm push-ups!
- 3) **Lunges** - works your quads, hamstrings, glutes, and calves.
Form: Stand with feet together, then take one big step forward. Bend your knees and lower your body into a lunge position keeping both the front and back knees at 90 degree angles. Make sure the front knee is stacked on top of, and not over, the toes. Keep the weight in your heels. Push back up to the original position.
- 4) **Plank** - Works the back, arms, legs, and abs, including the internal abdominal musculature.
Form: Hold your body in a push-up position (refer above) (if you have wrist problems, lower to your elbows and forearms instead). Hold up as long as you can, ensuring not to let your abs sag nor your buttocks rise up.

Cardiovascular Training: You can get your heart rate up by walking, running, swimming, etc...pick your favorite!

Here are the three most commonly used cardio equipment:

- 1) **Treadmill:**
 - a. Burns the most calories of any cardiovascular machines available at most gyms
 - b. Expect to burn about 100 calories per mile, walking briskly
 - c. Poses a balance challenge for new exercisers or for those who haven't worked out in a while
- 2) **Elliptical or Stair Steppers:**

- a. Packs a little less punch on the joints
 - b. The calorie-burn rate is pretty high due to the standing position as more muscle mass is used
 - c. Those equipments with the arm components will further increase calorie-burn
- 3) Stationery Bikes:
- a. Experts agree that stationery bikes cause the least impact on the joints
 - b. These are beneficial for those with knee pains

Flexibility Training: Try a yoga class to increase flexibility, or stretch daily on your own. As you stretch, don't bounce up and down.

I prefer a 5 - 10 minute dynamic warm-up before any exercise, e.g. jumping rope, running, or walking in place, etc...). To avoid tightness and prevent injuries, it is important to stretch all the muscle groups that you've worked on in each aerobic or strength training session.

And last, but not least, to add to your healthy resolution - incorporate omega-3 fatty acids into your lifestyle. Omega-3 fatty acids such as EPA and DHA are much needed for the structure and function of every cell in your body. These omega-3 help fight inflammation, helps maintain healthy supple skin, improve cardiovascular health, and support brain and nervous systems health. Consume 2 - 4 servings of fish per week - wild salmon is a great choice! Or if fish is not an option, take the appropriate amount of EPA/DHA supplement in capsule form (1 - 2 g. daily).

"A good doctor is your partner along the path to optimal health and well-being" Mel Zuckerman