Maintain Your Exercise Momentum

If, like many people, you set a resolution to step up your exercise this year, you may have been gung-ho to keep at it for several weeks following New Year’s. But as you start meeting your goals and reaching a plateau in your progress, your motivation may be beginning to wane. Before you get too far off track and lose interest completely, try these tips to keep your momentum going.

1. **Stick to a specific time and day to exercise.** You’ll be less likely to get sidetracked.
2. **Keeping thinking of it as “me time.”** Exercise is a great way to work on yourself, reduce stress and boost your mood—and your energy to keep moving!
3. **Buddy up!** Exercising with a friend, family member, or coworker can keep you accountable to your goal and make it difficult to ditch the exercise. Adding in some friendly competition will increase the activity and enjoyment!
4. **Journal your efforts.** A fitness device or app is great to track your activity, but an exercise journal enables you to be more specific including how exercise makes you feel (a great reminder when your motivation flags).
5. **Reward yourself as you progress.** For example, if you exercise 5 days each week for two weeks, treat yourself to a movie, or a healthy snack.
6. **Continuously set goals.** Having something to work toward is helpful for follow-through.

Get Your Plate in Shape

While healthy eating is often considered complicated or challenging, it is actually very simple! If you’re not doing so already, it’s a great time to start thinking about what foods go on your plate and whether your meals are comprised of foods from all the major food groups. So how do you know how much of each food group is the right amount and whether or not you’re eating healthfully? Here are some tips to help you get started on your path toward better eating habits.

- **Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies.** A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is key to maintaining a healthy body as they are high in fiber, full of vitamins and a source of carbohydrates.
- **Aim for a quarter of your plate at each meal to be a grain.** These foods are carbohydrates, the main source of energy for your body.
- **Make protein one quarter of your plate at each meal.** This macronutrient is essential to the building, maintenance and repair of body tissues including skin, organs and muscles.
- **Be smart about beverages** to limit unnecessary calories and sugar.
- **Focus on healthy fats.** Certain types of fats are essential components of a healthy diet.
Be Resilient to Overcome Resistance to Change

Change is inevitable, comes in many forms and usually means facing the unknown. It can trigger fear, stress, and even panic over the loss of control. Most of us have a natural resistance to change. But following these strategies can help you navigate change with less stress and successfully come out on the other side.

**Change your reaction.** It's the only part of change you can control! For example, if you're facing an empty nest, focus on the exciting opportunities that await your child on the road to adulthood.

**Learn to adapt.** If you've had to move to a new location, for instance, think of it as a chance to expand your social circle.

**Practice acceptance.** If you've lost a loved one, for instance, acknowledge the sadness but keep positive memories top of mind to keep from being overcome with grief.

**Make counting your blessings a habit.** Research suggests that gratitude helps improve your mood and increases your resilience to bounce back from upsets.

Seek support. Whether it is family, friends, coworkers or a support group, having people to talk to can remind you that you're capable and will make it through the change!

If you're feeling overwhelmed by changes in your life, talk to your healthcare practitioner who may suggest additional support.

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**National Nutrition Month**

**Read:** Learn how to plan healthy meals and create healthier eating habits for you and your family from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Find out more:**

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