



Thrive

JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH

TOOLKIT



JANUARY: SMART GOALS

Have New Year's resolutions become old news? They never last; they're not achievable. There's not enough time; life always gets in the way. These are all pretty typical excuses with a common denominator: they are the results of us failing to make SMART goals.

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely, a helpful acronym designed to focus our perspectives by providing precision and clarity to one's goals for self-improvement. So, this year, let's rethink and restate those elusive New Year's resolutions with SMART goals and new attitudes.

Resolutions are great ways to set goals for our well-being, even if we are tired of hearing or talking about them. This year is not the time to forgo New Year's resolutions; it is time to rebrand them for the better.

Making your goals specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound is an effective way to ensure your resolutions last. When defining and declaring your resolution, follow the example below and make it SMART:

Before: "I want to lose weight."

Although admirable, this is not a SMART goal. It is merely an assertion that lacks the self-encouragement and motivation necessary to achieve any long-term goal.

After: "I will attend fitness classes at my gym three days a week to lose 1.6 pounds per month this year."

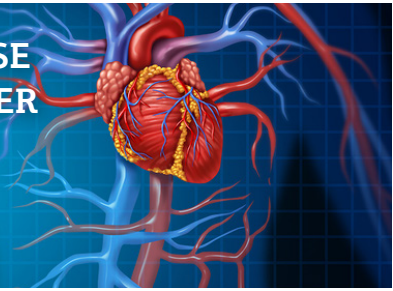
This is much better because it explicitly defines your intentions by focusing on a set number of pounds in a specific time frame, describes how you will accomplish it all and is realistic and achievable.





FEBRUARY: HEART HEALTH

February is American Heart Month to raise awareness of and ultimately prevent heart disease. Heart disease affects our family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, community and state.



**HEART DISEASE
IS THE NUMBER
ONE CAUSE
OF DEATH IN
OKLAHOMA**

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in Oklahoma, the state is among the top six in the country for heart disease mortality, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A healthy heart supplies the body with the right amount of blood at the rate needed to work efficiently. Subsequently, your heart is essential to your health and nearly everything that happens in your body.

The healthy changes you make, big or small, can lower your risk of developing heart disease or can control it if you already have it. To reduce your risk:

- ▶ **Quit smoking and avoid secondhand smoke.** The chemicals in tobacco harm blood cells and damage the structure and function of your blood and heart.
- ▶ **Manage your weight.** Losing weight can reduce the workload on your heart. Even moderate weight loss can improve heart and vascular health.

▶ **Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.**

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that your body needs to build cells. When there is too much cholesterol in your blood, it builds up on the walls of the arteries and can restrict blood flow to and from the heart. Blockages can lead to heart attack. Blood pressure is the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels. When it is too high, it can lead to heart attack, stroke and heart failure.

▶ **If you drink alcohol, drink only in**

moderation. Too much alcohol can raise some fats in the blood (triglycerides) and lead to high blood pressure and heart failure. The American Heart Association recommends an average of 1-2 drinks per day for men and one per day for women. (A drink is one 12-ounce beer, 4 ounces of wine, 1.5 ounces of 80-proof spirits or 1 ounce of 100-proof spirits.)

- ▶ **Get active and eat healthy.** The heart is a muscle, so exercise is the key to building and maintaining its strength and regulating blood flow to the organs. Researchers have found a link between physical inactivity and a higher risk of heart disease. The American Heart Association recommends getting at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of heart-pumping exercise per week. Eating healthy is the best weapon against heart disease. Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and fatty fish. Eat fewer foods that have added sugars, salt or fats.

MARCH: NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

March is National Nutrition Month. During this time, you can focus on the importance of making informed food choices that provide you with the energy and motivation you need to accomplish your daily goals. A healthy diet can seem complicated and scary, but it doesn't have to be. We tend to label food as good or bad. It shouldn't be about what fad diets and drinks claim to help you lose the most weight.

Many diets don't work because they focus on deprivation as opposed to foods you can eat. When your body is deprived of food, it lowers its metabolic rate and stores fat. What you resist persists. Food deprivation can result in obsessing about food more than usual.

Proper nutrition is about fueling your body so you have optimal energy to accomplish all the things you need and want to do every day. The four principles of a good diet are:

- ▶ **Quality of food** – Choose high quality foods that will energize you and not drain your energy.
- ▶ **Variety of choices** – Have a broad array of choices because we can get bored with food easily.
- ▶ **Moderation** – All food is okay in moderation. However, some food provides more nutrition than others.
- ▶ **Adequate to meet needs** – Everybody is different so make sure your diet meets your specific needs.

HEALTH TIPS FOR 2022

Start your morning with a healthy breakfast that includes lean protein, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Try making a breakfast burrito with scrambled eggs, low-fat cheese, salsa and a whole-wheat tortilla or a parfait with low-fat plain yogurt, fruit and whole-grain cereal.

Fruits and veggies add color, flavor and texture plus vitamins, minerals and fiber to your plate. Make 2

cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal. Experiment with different types, including fresh, frozen and canned.

Get out the measuring cups and see how close your portions are to the recommended serving size. Use half your plate for fruits and vegetables and the other half for grains and lean protein foods. To complete the meal, add a serving of fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt.

Regular physical activity has many health benefits. Start by doing what exercise you can. For example, children and teens should get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day and adults at least 2 hours and 30 minutes per week. You don't have to hit the gym; take a walk after dinner or play a game of catch or basketball.

Reading the Nutrition Facts panel can help you shop, eat and drink smarter.

Healthy snacks sustain your energy levels between meals, mainly when they include a combination of foods. Choose from two or more of the MyPlate food groups: grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy and protein. Try raw veggies with low-fat cottage cheese or a tablespoon of peanut butter with an apple or banana. Regardless if you want to lose weight, lower health-risks or manage a chronic disease, you should consult the experts! Registered dietitian nutritionists can provide sound, easy-to-follow, personalized nutrition advice.

Reduce your chances of getting sick by following proper food safety guidelines. This includes regular hand washing, separating raw foods from ready-to-eat foods, cooking foods to the appropriate internal temperature and promptly refrigerating it. Learn more about home food safety at homefoodsafety.org.

Quench your thirst with water instead of drinks with added sugars. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water, especially if you are active, an older adult or live or work in hot conditions.

Preparing foods at home can be healthy, rewarding and cost effective. Master kitchen basics, like dicing onions or cooking dried beans by viewing the Planning and Prep videos at eatright.org/videos.

