Making a New Year’s Resolution this year? If it’s to lose the same 10 pounds you have been trying, year, after year, after year, consider making a new doable resolution with equally big health payoffs! Take your pick of these 10 attainable resolutions that you can actually tackle this year:

1. Get More Sleep—What can help you feel more energized during the day, improve your mood, and even help you lose weight? Sleep!

2. Eat a Veggie or Fruit with Every Meal—According to research, Americans eat far fewer veggies and fruits than they need, and given the evidence linking veggie and fruit consumption to disease prevention, this is a smart resolution anyone can make and earn rewards from.

3. Find a Form of Exercise That You Love—Don’t care for jogging or aerobics? That doesn’t mean you should give up on exercise! What works for one person might not work for the other person. It may take some trial and error to find a form of exercise that is enjoyable for you. Find one that you enjoy so you will be more consistent.

4. Make More Social Dates With Friends—What? A resolution to party?!?! It’s true—an active social life can have major payoffs when it comes to your health. “Research shows that a healthy social life can help you stick to your healthy habits, fight disease and depression, reduce stress, enhance your sense of purpose in life, promote greater happiness, and even live longer”.

5. Extract Yourself from a Toxic Relationship—Whether it’s from a romance gone bad or a friendship that leaves you feeling unhappy, 2015 is the year to set yourself free!

6. End the Negative Self-Talk—We all talk negative about ourselves from time to time but too much negative self talk can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more you tell yourself you are not worthy, the more you feel that way, and you may even act accordingly. Every time you notice you are talking negatively about yourself turn things around with positive thoughts like “I can learn from the past”, “I know I can do this”. The result will be greater empowerment and inspiration to make and sustain positive changes.
7. **Stop Sweating the Small Stuff**—Resolve and let the annoying but insignificant stuff go this year. Yes, this means no more crying over spilled milk! Psychological stress, even in small doses, can cause physical and emotional stress in our bodies. When we are emotionally overwhelmed, angry or frustrated, our bodies release cortisol, also known as the "stress hormone". Excessive cortisol can deplete immune functioning, resulting in our bodies having trouble fighting off disease.

It can also suppress thyroid function, decrease muscle tissue, and increase abdominal fat. So when something starts ruffling your feathers, take a deep breathe and stop sweating the small stuff!

8. **Cook More at Home**—While relying on restaurant food after long days at work can be convenient, it can have health consequences. The problem with a lot of restaurant food is that the portions can be larger, more caloric, and higher in fat and sodium than a home-cooked meal. Try planning your meals for the week ahead of time for convenience.

9. **Cut Back on Sugar**—Don’t worry, you don’t have to give up your favorite indulgences to make this resolution work. Simply take a look at the added sugar in foods, and try to eat as little of the sweet stuff as possible. Try preventing cravings before they start by making sure you’re eating regularly throughout the day. Skipping meals is one sure way to lead yourself to make poor choices. A midday snack of a plain low-fat yogurt can help stop you in your tracks long before you hit the vending machine. Enjoy natural sweets such as fruits, cinnamon, and even a sweet potato in your diet to give your body the sweet taste you’re longing for.

10. **Come Up With a Healthy Living Mantra**—Whether it’s "one step at a time" or something simpler, falling back on a phrase that can help you refocus your mental and physical health can have big payoffs. To find your mantra, designate a calming, motivating phrase that rings true to you, and think about it or whisper it to yourself when you need encouragement.

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**Having a positive mantra can counter any negative thoughts you may be having while helping you stay hopeful and motivated to live a happy and healthy life.** ~Dr. Lombardo~

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**Physical Activity—Choose the One For You**

Once you’ve decided to build physical activity into your daily life, the next most important decision is the activity you choose. Look for a type of physical activity that you’re likely to enjoy. You are more likely to abandon a healthy lifestyle change if your chosen activity doesn’t suit your preferences or lifestyle.

See your doctor for advice, support and a medical check-up before you start any new physical activity program. This is particularly important if you are over 40 years old, overweight, haven't exercised in a long time, or suffer from a chronic medical condition.

What is your style? Do you like things organized or prefer a more casual approach? Do you like to do things on your own or to be part of a group-based activity?

Tips to help you choose the right physical activity. Try to choose an activity you enjoy and that suits your lifestyle. Suggestions include:

- Don’t choose an outdoor activity if you are bothered by weather extremes such as heat or cold.
- Don’t pick an activity solely because...
Physical Activity—Choose the One For You (continued)

you think it would be “good” for you—

enjoyment is the key to sticking to your

plan.

- Think back. Did you enjoy a par-

ticular physical activity as a child,

such as cycling or basketball? If

so, give that activity another go.

- Keep your budget in mind. Some

physical activities, such as skiing or

sailing, can require a big financial

investment. Decide whether you

can afford expensive equipment.

- Be realistic about your current

health and level of fitness. If you

are a beginner, the physical de-

mands of certain activities (such as

running) may be too much at first.

Choose a gentler alternative and

work your way up.

- Choose at least a couple activities

to help keep you interested. You

may get bored and lose motivation

if you stick to only one form of

physical activity.

Consider the advantages and disadvan-
tages of the physical activity to help

you decide which may be best for you.

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How to Be Successful at Maintaining Your Weight Loss

Maintaining weight loss is the most dif-

ficult part of any weight loss program.

After losing weight, it is easy to re-

turn to the old eating and exercise hab-

its you had before, which is where the

big problems occurred in the first

place. A major factor that many people

forget is that as your weight goes down,

so does your caloric needs. Here are

two tips that can help you maintain your

weight loss.

1. Reduce your energy intake or in-

crease your energy expenditure by

as little as 100kcal/day. This can

be done by walking for just 15 min-

utes, or eating a few bites less at

each meal.

2. Switch up your exercise routine!

While working on losing weight, it is

easy to stick with what you knew

worked, but that’s not the case

anymore. With your new weight

and hopefully new confidence, try
different things that you would

have never dreamed of doing be-

fore. Go dancing, rock climbing,
yoga, backpacking, etc...You’ve al-

ready accomplished something
great by getting down to the

weight you wanted to, so now it’s
time for some fun!

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~Jared Sabin, Registered Dietician
Student~