

Resolve to be healthy and well!

This is a time for making resolutions to do better with our lives and the gifts God has provided. Resolve to improve your state of health and wellness – such as eating better, smart weight loss, more daily activity, or all the above! Although some bad habits are persistent, they can be changed, which will allow us to live healthier and longer with better quality of life.

A healthy lifestyle is not just about activity – attitudes, diet, social times, family life, sleep, safe behaviors, and spirituality all play their roles, as well. Here are some things to consider as resolutions to improve health and wellness in the New Year.

Reduce stress in your life. The amount of tension in your day affects temperament and blood pressure, ages you faster, and decreases the effectiveness of your immune system. Learn to channel tension into healthy, active pursuits and thereby reduce stress. And while you're at it – carrying an old grudge is a lot of work, learn to forgive and move on if someone has wronged you.

If you need to – lose some weight in a healthy manner. Starvation type diets, diet pills, and the latest TV and internet gimmicks will not work – for long. Daily exercise, portion control at mealtime, and avoiding snacks can help. Aim for a diet high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, olive oil, and include some meats other than red meat. These choices will not only be good for your heart and help you lose weight (in proper portions), but also lower the risk of developing diabetes, strengthen your immune system, and improve your skin, hair, and nails! Think “eat to live” rather than “live to eat.”

Exercise regularly and often. Instead of sitting on the couch watching TV on a nice day, go play golf, walk, run, go work out at Yourtime Fitness or Studio E, do some steps at Tallulah Gorge, or “go take a hike!” We live in the most beautiful place in the world – get out and enjoy it, and improve your health and attitude at the same time!

Good sleep is excellent medicine. It not only promotes health, but helps you have a more positive outlook, be friendlier, think sharper, and be more efficient in your work. Resolve to make getting good sleep a priority.

Use safety gear when needed and practice safe activities. Always wear seat belts when driving or riding, and a properly fitted helmet when on a motorcycle or bicycle. Use eye protection when using power tools, and ear protection when around loud noises such as power tools, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, etc. Be careful using ladders this time of the year to clean out gutters. Always practice safe behavior with knives, while chopping wood, using chainsaws and with firearms -- assume every gun is loaded.

If you can change your habits along these lines, you will live healthy, well, and longer with more quality of life along the way. Best of luck and may 2016 be full of happiness, wellness, and success for you and yours!