

“Resolve to be more active this new year!”

One resolution we could all make (and keep) is to be more active this year. You can take this as far as you want, and do it the way you want. It is something you can easily customize to your individual situation. If you want, you can join a gym or fitness club. Or, you can buy a treadmill for your home, or some fancy multi-purpose exercise equipment. Often, after a time, these become things to “hang clothes on,” or other such uses unrelated to exercise.

Or, a better idea would be to take advantage of your own mobility and this beautiful area we are blessed to live in, and just get out more! A walk in your neighborhood, a hike in the woods, or visiting the suspension bridge at Tallulah Gorge can all be good ways to get your heart rate up and see some scenery. If you don’t or can’t walk much – get some light weights or exercise bands and learn to use them at home.

Do what you can, as much as you can, and try to increase that amount over time. If the weather is bad, consider visiting a large grocery or department store and walk around inside. The goal is to get your blood pumping and your heart rate up, and this does not really take any money or special equipment.

If you have tried and just can’t do any of this, talk to your healthcare provider. There are some conditions that are treatable that can rob you of energy and lead to malaise, fatigue, and weakness. Poor nutrition is one such issue that can leave you feeling like you cannot do much. You may think you eat enough – but don’t eat the right foods. Sugar is a quick high, but it does not really give you endurance, and it signals your body to make fat instead of muscle. A diet higher in protein can help you more in this regard. And remember, you do need some fat in your diet, but it needs to be “good fat” like that from nuts, olive oil, and fish.

Another “energy thief” can be if you have a poorly functioning thyroid gland. This can certainly lead to loss of energy, slow you down, and just generally make you feel lethargic most of the time. Hair loss, weight gain, and slow heart rate can be other signs of hypothyroidism. If you suspect this could be the case, your provider can do some fairly simple tests to find out, and then treat you with some medicine, if needed, which can help restore the proper balance.

But, the main cause of being inactive is just “being inactive!” It becomes a bad habit. The more you get out and do things, and get in better shape – the more you will be able to and want to do things. Increased activity is something we could all easily do to make this New Year a better one for ourselves and those who depend on us. Happy New Year!