

Tips to keep New Year's resolutions

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(HealthDay)—Lose weight. Eat healthier. Quit smoking. These are all popular New Year's resolutions that are often only kept for a short time, if at all.

About 40% of Americans make a New Year's [resolution](#), most of which are abandoned by February, according to researchers at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

But Bernadette Melnyk, [vice president](#) for [health promotion](#) and chief wellness officer and dean of the College of Nursing at Ohio State, has some tips to help you make your resolutions stick:

- Set a realistic, specific, 30-day goal. The more specific and realistic the goal, the more likely it will be achieved.
- Break big goals down into small ones, and try to tackle one small change for 30 days. Many resolutions fail because people try too much, too fast.
- Write your goal down and put it where you can see it every day. Keep a journal of your successes and write encouraging messages to yourself.
- Visualize yourself accomplishing your goal and celebrating your success. If you have a [positive attitude](#), you're more likely to achieve your goal.
- Share your resolution with a friend or family member, and enlist them to help support your effort with encouraging texts and calls as you let them in on your progress.
- Work toward your goal one day at a time. You can always start again if you fall behind or forget a day. Be patient and kind to yourself. Remember it can take 30 to 60 days to make a new habit stick or to break an old one.

More information: For more on keeping your resolutions, head to the [American Psychological Association](#).

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