

# NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

## Fact Sheet



## Make Your Resolutions Stick in 2014

### Create Lasting Change

Each of us probably know at least one area where we could stand to make a habit change in order to boost our health and happiness. However, making any lifestyle change is hard, no matter what time of year. The New Year brings with it a renewed desire by many to make a healthy change, but without a game plan these changes can be hard to maintain.

### Listen to the Experts

Behavior change professionals say efforts to change are more likely to produce results if they are SMART— that is, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based. If you are thinking of making a change in your own life, or already attempting a change, ask yourself if your goal passes the **SMART** test:

1. Set a very **specific** goal. For example, if improving nutrition is your resolution, break it down into smaller related goals, such as adding one additional serving of produce to your diet each day. Once that becomes second nature, add another piece of produce, until you meet your fruit and veggie goal.
2. Find a way to **measure** progress. If adding more physical activity into your daily routine is your goal, log your activities and time spent on your calendar, on a mobile app, or in a journal.
3. Make sure your goals— both small and large— are **achievable**. This is perhaps one of the most important steps. If your goal is to stop smoking, don't anticipate cold turkey success if that hasn't worked before. Instead have a formal game plan that includes support, a specific step down approach, and a plan for overcoming obstacles.

4. Make sure the goals you are setting are **realistic**. It may seem a little counterintuitive, but choosing to make a change that you are most confident you will achieve— rather than the change you most need to make— gives you a better chance of total success. Focus on sure bets: if you are confident you can add whole foods to your diet, but less confident that you can commit to a significant weight loss, start with the sure thing, and work gradually toward your greater goal.
5. Set **time** commitments. Pick a date and time to start and be as specific as possible. Schedule the changes you are trying to practice into your daily routine (such as exercise 30 minutes immediately after work, or prep healthy foods each Sunday afternoon to have better options during the busy week). Treat these goals the same as you would any other appointment— one that you don't want to forget, miss, or have to reschedule. If you give importance to your personal goals and the time you dedicate to achieving them, you will more likely have success.

### Remember the Manta, Simple Changes to Lasting Rewards

Remember, no lasting change can be achieved in a short period of time and without effort and support. However, that does not mean that creating permanent change in your life is impossible. Use the SMART technique to break large goals into smaller, more manageable ones that will lead to great success overall.

For more information on goal setting, behavior change, and other Wellness resources, please email [wellness@azdoa.gov](mailto:wellness@azdoa.gov) or call 602-771-9355. The full schedule of Wellness events can also be found online at [benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness](http://benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness).