

Most Popular (and Achievable) New Year's Resolutions

According to a [poll](#) conducted by *U.S. News & World Report*, only 12% of Americans do not make New Year's resolutions. For those of us who choose to set annual goals, the most popular resolutions for 2010 are: reduce stress (65%) save money (63%); exercise more (62%); eat better (62%); and lose weight (46%). If these resolutions or others you are considering for 2010 seem daunting, below are several simple and achievable resolutions that can make a big impact in your New Year.



Establish Family Time: Commit to sitting down together for a family dinner at least once per week.

Go to Bed: Get between 7 ½ -8 hours of sleep every night. If you know what time you must wake, subtract 8 hours and make that your bedtime.

Floss Your Teeth: While brushing twice per day is important, flossing is often the missing component in oral health. Floss at least once per day; research suggests it may help reduce the risk of heart attacks.

Make or Update Your Will: Nearly 50% of Americans do not have a will in place. Create a will to protect your children and make sure your final wishes are observed.

Prepare for Emergencies: Prepare for disasters by organizing a preparedness kit for your family that includes important paperwork, cash, emergency radio and supplies like water and pet food.



Improve Your Health Lying Down

The average adult needs 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep and not just so you can avoid the mid-afternoon slump the next day. Sleep provides the body with numerous benefits including: rest and repair, cell growth and restoration and stimulates proper brain function and memory. Adults who are chronically sleep-deprived face negative consequences like compromised immune function, memory loss, increased risk of chronic illnesses, higher incidence of accidents and injuries and decreased productivity. Making time for 7 ½ – 8 hours of sleep is one of the greatest health habits you can establish.

Get More Than a Meal with Family Dinners

This year make a resolution to eat dinner together as a family at least once a week. Extensive [research](#) conducted at the University of Minnesota has found numerous positive outcomes in households where family mealtimes are a frequent occurrence. While some of these benefits are no surprise – children and adolescents who have frequent family dinners eat fewer calories, more fruits and vegetables and consume more calcium, iron, fiber and vitamins B6, B12, C and E – some other findings may surprise you. According to research, children whose families eat dinner together have better grades, are at a 70% lower risk for substance abuse, are 50% less likely to try cigarettes and 30% less likely to try alcohol.

New Year, new food:



Balsamic Chicken and Tomatoes (serves 4)

INGREDIENTS: 1 TB olive oil; 3 cloves chopped garlic, 2 (8 oz) boneless/skinless chicken breasts (halved), 8 ounces fresh spinach, 2 TB balsamic vinegar, 1/3 cup chicken broth, 1 cup canned chopped tomatoes with juice.

PREPARE: Add olive oil to medium-high heat in large pan, add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add chicken and cook about 4 minutes per side or until cooked through. Remove chicken & set aside. In same pan, add spinach and cook until just wilted. Remove from pan & set aside. Lower heat and add vinegar and broth, add tomatoes, bring to simmer for 3-5 minutes. Serve chicken over couscous or brown rice; top with spinach and balsamic-tomato sauce.