

5 Easy Ways to Reach Your Weight Loss Goal

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The New Year represents a time for change. How each of us determines what that change is can obviously vary from person to person, but weight loss is typically popular. An early December [Reuters poll](#) of 1,029 U.S. residents found that of the 44 percent who said they might make a [resolution](#), 16 percent want to [lose weight](#).

Find out how to not only lose weight, but also keep it off with the following advice provided by Shamsul Emrich, personal trainer at The Sports Club/LA in Boston, and Julie Fortenberry, sports and lifestyle nutritionist at East Jefferson General Hospital's Fitness Principle with Mackie Shilstone in Metairie, La.

Eat small, frequent meals.

Fortenberry advised eating five or six small meals throughout the day, roughly every three hours. "It doesn't have to be a meal -- it can be a piece of [fruit](#) and some [nuts](#)," she said. It isn't necessary to restrict late-night eating, but you don't want to make it your biggest meal, either. You also don't want to skip it: Fortenberry said that guys typically overeat the following morning if dinner isn't served.

Cut out the white flour.

This goes for any product -- white rice, pasta, bread. Choose 100 percent whole wheat whenever you can. "White flour just turns to fat," Fortenberry said. And think of cereal, crackers and muffins as just more products that are made from white flour. Brown rice and whole-wheat pasta and bread are readily available in grocery stores. Sticking to those items and eliminating white flour is an easy and cheap way to jump-start your weight loss.

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Limit processed foods.

Drop the canned soup. Instead, go to a local farmers market and buy the [ingredients](#) you need for homemade soup -- your [recipe](#) can last days if you make a sizable portion. Winter is admittedly a tough season to avoid processed foods, since many fruits and vegetables simply aren't in season. Still, Fortenberry pointed out that pairing peanut butter with apples or pears is a great way to incorporate fruit into a [diet](#). Mainstream

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vegetables like broccoli, carrots and cauliflower are still good during the coldest months, and they make dynamite soup or stew ingredients.

Take a picture.

Emrich recommended using the before-and-after picture method. Take a picture of yourself now, then find a picture of what you want your body to look like. Use it as daily motivation. Once you get to the gym, think about combining upper- and lower-body workouts into a superset, such as pull-ups and [lunges](#). Emrich said three or four sets of 10 to 15 reps are satisfactory. "Get as much workload as you can," he said.

Don't lose faith.

It might be easy to feel as if the weight loss process is daunting. It doesn't have to be that way, so don't get discouraged if the weight doesn't come off immediately. "Everybody started somewhere," Emrich said. "Nobody showed up at the gym looking like they do. Don't be dissuaded by the people you see in magazines."

Fortenberry also likes pedometers. Wear one and try to [walk](#) 10,000 steps each day, which is roughly five miles. If your walking is typically confined to between your house and car and your desk and water cooler, then gradually incorporate more walking until you reach 10,000.

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