

How to Start Off the New Year Eating Healthy

The holidays have come and gone so now it's time to kick off the New Year with a healthy start. Here are some tips to help you stay on track and make healthy eating a part of your daily life:

1) **Eat a high-fiber, low-fat breakfast each day.** No matter how busy you are, do not skip breakfast. Eating a healthy breakfast helps you eat less throughout the day.

2) **Make lunch your biggest meal of the day.** This gives you the opportunity to burn off the calories and provides an energy boost to get you through the afternoon.

3) **Snack on fruits, vegetables and high-fiber foods** such as nuts and whole grains whenever possible. Fiber fills you up and helps prevent overeating.

4) **Watch the sodium.** Try to keep your sodium intake to 2,300 mg or less. You will retain less water and reduce your risk of developing hypertension.

5) **Consume at least 3 servings of low-fat or non-fat dairy products each day.** Dairy products provide calcium which is important for maintaining strong bones.

6) **Limit alcohol consumption.** Alcoholic drinks are high in calories and can cause you to make poor food judgments.

7) **Drink plenty of water.** People often mistake thirst for hunger which can lead to overeating.

8) **Watch your portions.** Use a smaller plate. This helps you eat less. Only eat half your meal when you eat out and bring the rest home for later.

9) **Eat slowly and enjoy your meal.** It takes 20 minutes for your brain to tell your stomach that it is full.

10) **Shop the perimeter of the grocery store.** The healthiest choices are usually placed on the perimeter such as fruits/vegetables, dairy, meat and bread. The inner aisles contain more processed foods (think boxes and cans!).

