


Take the 10 Day Challenge

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By Kathy Smith, fitness expert, author and TV personality

With the new year just budding, this is the perfect time to hit the reset button on our old habits as we begin to create new ones. While I support the importance of New Year's resolutions and those who want to set a goal to get healthier and take better care of their body's, I've never been a fan of that "The diet starts January 1st" mentality. That kind of attitude treats nutrition and exercise as an experiment or a novelty, rather than a lifestyle. So I'm here to present the opposite of a resolution - this is a new lifestyle beginning - regardless of when you start.

My challenge is a week and a half of endless opportunities to clean up our diet. Take it one day at a time and build each new habit upon the next one until we've created a doable, realistic, new way of eating.

Day 1 - Sleep it off.

Be sure to get a good night's sleep so that we're not dragging in the morning.

Day 2 - You are what you drink.

When we think of nutrition we often overlook the importance of liquids. Increasing our water intake is key. I like to jazz up my water with a fresh lemon or vitamin C packet. I also love freshly-juiced green drinks loaded with spinach and kale. If you're a caffeine junkie, switch your sugary, calorie-laden latte for a cup of heart-healthy green tea.

Day 3 - What goes in must come out.

That's right - we can't underestimate the importance of elimination. That means increasing our fiber intake. Shoot for 25 grams a day - the more you can get the better - to get our digestion on track for the New Year.

Day 4 - Make it a 5-veggie day.

Push produce intake and get creative with veggie selection. Don't stick to the tired formula of iceberg lettuce and carrot sticks. Try adding some kale and collard greens to your diet.

Day 5 - Shrug off sugar.

You'll be amazed by the results when you cut back on refined sugars. Simple substitutions like choosing sparkling water over soda or a fresh orange over a glass of orange juice can do wonders for our mood, energy levels and waistline.

Day 6 - Shop yourself thin.

Weight loss doesn't start in the kitchen, it starts at the source - the grocery store! Stock up on healthy treats that you'll actually look forward to eating, so that you have plenty of options when hunger strikes. And stick to the perimeter of the supermarket, that's where the fresh produce, low-fat dairy and protein options usually are. The center aisles are usually filled with cookies, crackers, and packaged stuff you'd like to avoid.

Day 7 - Grab some different grains.

So many people have gluten sensitivities that wreak havoc on their digestive systems. Remember, not everything containing the word "wheat" is considered healthy. Try cutting back on grains altogether, getting the majority of your carbs and fiber from veggies and fruit. Instead of bread, try wrapping your sandwiches with lettuce. And when you do eat grains, choose the purer variety like steel-cut oatmeal, quinoa and brown rice.

Day 8 - Pick your proteins.

Proteins are a major building block in any nutrition plan so choose wisely. Egg whites, lean cuts of turkey, chicken, and even some lean beef are the perfect way to round out our meals. Beans and legumes are also great sources of protein.

Day 9 - Find the right fats.

Just because we'll be losing fat in 2013 doesn't mean we won't be eating fat. We can include a **small** portion of healthy fats such as avocado, olives and nuts.

Day 10 - Cook in Saladmaster.

As we change our diets to a more healthy version, we also want to be cooking them in the most healthy manner possible and that means cooking in Saladmaster. We can cook on low heat and without nutrient-draining water or calorie ridden oils. And the really exciting thing on our new healthy eating program, is our food will taste fabulous!

For more information about Saladmaster and Healthy Solutions 316 Ti Cookware, please visit www.saladmaster.com

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