



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

Corporate Communication

1300 E Avenue □ Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8524 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 4-8524

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

www.commissaries.com

Release Number: 05-11
Date: January 18, 2011
Contact: Karen Hawkins, DeCA dietitian
Tel.: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8404
E-mail: karen.hawkins@deca.mil

Make this year's resolution 'SMART'

*By Chris Halagarda,
Navy fitness and performance enhancement dietitian*

FORT LEE, Va. – This is the season when millions of Americans will choose to lose weight as their New Year's resolution. If you are one of those people who vowed to lose weight last year and the year before and the year before that, I ask you, "What will you do differently this year? What will you do this year that you didn't do last year or the year before?"

Weight loss is one of the most difficult challenges one will take on in their life and unfortunately, nine out of 10 people fail to reach their weight loss goals! For many people, it has become a social pastime to talk about their weight loss attempts. "What diet are you on?" "Oh, I can't eat bread on my diet," or "I'm going to drink this solution for three days, then I'll avoid sugar for two weeks, then I'll . . ." Does any of this sound familiar? If so, it's time to strategize and simplify your goals this year, and start living your life at a healthy weight.

The first step is to write down your goal and post it on your refrigerator or computer screen. Writing down your goal and placing it where you will see it will remind you regularly of it and keep you motivated.

Next, write down 5-10 reasons why you want to reach your goal and 1-3 changes that you will make to support your goal. How do you write a good goal? Follow the SMART principle of goal setting: specific, measurable, adjustable, action-oriented, realistic and time-based. For example, a common resolution that I hear is, "I want to lose weight." Although this is a goal, there is no way to measure the status and outcome. Remember, the ultimate goal is to reach a

healthy weight and then maintain that weight for your life. An example of a SMART revision of this same goal is: “I want to lose weight. Ultimately, I want to lose 20 pounds by Aug. 1.”

Small goals on the way to losing 20 pounds could be: “To measure my status on the way to my larger goal, I will lose 10 pounds by April 1 and 15 pounds by June 1.” By documenting these smaller goals, it allows you to adjust your bigger goal or adjust your behaviors. If on April 1 you have lost only eight pounds, you haven’t failed at your ultimate goal, but you now know you need to exercise more or reduce the amount or types of food you are eating.

So, now you have your ultimate goal and your smaller goals, how are you going to reach your goal? By having a realistic, time-based goal you will succeed this year by making small habit changes or “baby steps.”

Clients I have worked with have succeeded by applying simple changes that don’t require much effort, such as reducing or eliminating sugar from their morning coffee, walking for a couple of minutes every half hour at work, trying a new fruit or vegetable from the commissary every week, lifting weights (any resistance training) once or twice a week for 15 minutes during lunch, eating a fruit or vegetable with every meal, making a “vegetarian food” day every week, packing a brown-bag lunch three days a week, decreasing the number of times you eat out by two trips each week or choosing only whole grains for breakfast.

Finally, it’s really important to not take on too much. Despite having witnessed many successful health improvements, I have also seen many people fail at their weight loss attempts. The No. 1 reason for not succeeding was trying to change their lifestyle too drastically. So, this year, try learning from your mistakes and other’s mistakes.

Choose one or two habits and follow them for a month. If after four weeks you’re still following those two habits, then and only then, should you add another lifestyle change. With these baby steps, maybe next year your New Year’s resolution could be to save more money.

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian’s Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on www.twitter.com and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay’s Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

-DeCA-

-- Chris Halagarda is the Navy Fitness, Performance Enhancement Dietitian. Please feel free to contact him with your questions at (202) 433-0721 or Chris.Halagarda@Navy.Mil.

About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth more than \$4,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*