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New Year's Resolutions:

What you need to know to have success this year



**by Fiona Kane
Nutritionist**

So now is the time that people regularly make New Year's Resolutions. This is a tradition in which a person makes a promise to do an act of self-improvement beginning from New Year's Day.

Did you know that research suggests that only 8% of people achieve their New Year's goals? Why is that? In some cases maybe it is easier to say I will start that next year until next year arrives and it all seems a bit too hard! Other's give up on their goals as soon as they lose track or make one mistake, in the belief that if it is not perfect, there is no point in doing it at all. Some people fail to plan which in essence is planning to fail!

Before you make any New Year's Resolutions, my suggestion is you start with this little but very important exercise first. Forgive yourself, yes, that's right, forgive yourself. Forgive yourself for all the resolutions you haven't kept/achieved

before, hanging on to shame about the past is not useful if you want to change the future, it will only hold you back.

Secondly, there is no such thing as perfect. Choosing to only do something if it is perfect is actually the perfect excuse. You know it can never be perfect; perfection is a form of self-abuse and will only result in procrastination. Let it go and just do your best, that is enough and when you know better you will do better. Just begin. It is also important to be aware that we all have a part of our brain called the reptilian brain, it is the part of our brain that wants to protect us from anything too scary and this includes change. Often when we embark on a big lifestyle change, our reptilian brain freaks out. It is afraid of change, any change so by the time you get to week two or three of your new lifestyle, the reptilian brain starts to feed logical excuses to you as to why you shouldn't bother anymore. So when you start thinking, oh it won't matter if I go through the drive through tonight for dinner or I'm too busy/tired to do my exercise, you know it is your reptilian brain kicking in. If you are aware from the beginning that it is likely to happen, you will be more likely

Calcium for Bones:

How much do I need and where from?



with Andreas Klein

The Australian guidelines specify a calcium intake of 1000mg/day for most adults. So where do you get it? From healthy foods, of course!

Why? Because getting calcium into bones is a complicated game requiring many different players. Obviously, calcium first needs to be in our foods in reasonable quantities. But then it needs to be extracted from these foods by proper digestion, then absorbed, assimilated into bone (and cells), and finally kept out of arteries and soft tissues. Only 'healthy foods' provide a balanced source of, not only calcium, but all of the ancillary nutrients that facilitate calcium's proper utilisation. These include (but are not limited to) vitamins A, B2, B6, B9 & B12, C, D, E & K, and minerals potassium, magnesium, boron, copper, zinc, strontium, and iron. In short, incorporating calcium is really about eating a highly varied low calorie nutrient dense diet.

So which foods? Well we are all familiar with the high calcium foods of industry promotional campaigns – milk and cheese! But this is a very one dimensional marketing driven view. It is true that these are good sources of calcium but while cheese is almost unsurpassable as a calcium source, it is extremely high in calories. When it comes to milk, the fact is that there are many foods that are excellent (indeed better) sources of calcium, both in terms of total calcium content and absorbability. These include foods such as sardines, winged beans, carob, tahini, wild caught pink and red salmon, almonds, parsley, dried

figs, spinach, natural yogurt, rhubarb, mussels, snapper, brazil nuts, oysters, mustard cabbage and kale, all better calcium sources than milk!

Many dark green leafy vegetables have relatively high calcium content (although some such as spinach and rhubarb are high in calcium oxalates which is a little harder to absorb). Cruciferous vegetables such as kale, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage etc are green yet essentially oxalate free, and have much calcium and plenty of the vitamins and minerals to help utilise it. Experiments show that our ability to get calcium from these foods is as good if not better than from milk. Western folk just don't eat enough (or sometimes any) of these vegetables daily.

Having said all this, research shows that Thai men and women have a calcium intake between 220-361mg per day. They consume few milk products and calcium comes mainly from vegetables, meat & fish (eaten bones and all). This calcium intake is significantly lower than the 1000 mg/d recommended by our health authorities. Yet the Thai men and women over 50 (and Malaysians with similarly low intakes) have age-adjusted rates of hip fractures almost two times lower than more westernised Asians in Hong Kong, Singapore, and U.S. caucasians. So, you can now see that whether you get a fracture or not is much less about the calcium you get and more about your overall diet and lifestyle habits!



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