

Natural Health News

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EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS
ELY, MN

A NEW YEAR—RESET, REFRESH, RESTORE



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STORE HOURS:

Tuesday – Saturday
9:30 am-5:30 pm

**CLOSED SUNDAYS
& MONDAYS**

SPA HOURS:

By Appointment

With the holiday season in the rear view mirror, winter remains in full swing. This is the time of year to rely on comfort foods and an extra blanket on the bed. It is also a season for personal reflection and a time to reset. However, it should also be a time to acknowledge your blessings and shortcomings and put into place smaller, more realistic shifts in your daily living. This resetting is not only kinder—it is also more sustainable. Most of us could use a little reset when it comes to eating. Just as we must occasionally hit the refresh button on the computer in order to see how changes made have taken effect, it is sometimes necessary to metaphorically hit the refresh button on one's life. By hitting our life refresh button, we can see where we have improved and where there is still room for improvement. After all, being healthy is not a one-time deal—it is something that takes continuous care and attention. In this issue I would like to offer steps to improve your diet to help maintain a healthy weight. The New Year is a great time to take an inventory of your needs, goals, and dreams. It is also a good opportunity to overhaul your daily eats and refocus on a handful of strategies to keep you feeling and looking your very best. 1. **Toss anything with trans fats:** the whole concept behind the creation of trans fats was to change the structure so they could have a longer shelf life. However, trans fats are linked to inflammation, heart disease, depression, DNA-damage and memory loss. In 2015, the FDA finally took a step to label trans fats in our food supply, but the ruling does not go into effect until this year. Many snacks still contain harmful levels of trans fats. Take a look at the package. If it says "partially hydrogenated oil," the product contains trans fats. Some labels will have "partially hydrogenated oil" listed as an ingredient, but also say "0 grams of trans fats," because companies can play the numbers game and round down if the product contains less than .49 grams of trans fat per serving. Don't fall for it. Unfortunately, even a small amount is enough to cause health problems. 2. **Pitch the artificial colors:** in Europe, many artificial colors and dyes were banned after research linked them to ADD, ADHD, allergies, and even cancer. Regretfully, the U.S. has decided that having brightly colored candies is more important than the potential health risks, and therefore so many foods with artificial colors are still on the grocery shelves, especially in the candy and cereal aisle. If you want colorful foods, find foods with natural or food-based dyes. You will be able to find a great variety at Organic Roots. 3. **Ditch the artificial sweeteners and refined sugars:** Splenda, aspartame—so many kinds, so many potential problems. Artificial sweeteners pose serious health risks and even cause cancer. Instead, cut down on the amount of natural sweeteners you use. When you need a little sweetness, use small amounts of dates, date sugar, honey, maple syrup, stevia, or even use fruit to sweeten recipes. **Kicking the sugar habit is one of the most important steps to better health.** Replace sugar bombs like soda, alcohol, and fruit drinks with herbal teas and water. 5. **Load up on veggies and fruits:** a healthy diet is full of organic vegetables, fruits, and healthy fats like nuts, seeds, olive oil, coconut oil and avocados. It is also a good idea to stock your freezer with frozen fruits and veggies as well, so that you are always prepared. When it comes to preparation, pretty much any method works—unless it is deep fried. Raw, steamed, sautéed, roasted, grilled—the options are endless. Make an effort to consume at least 5 cups of veggies in your daily diet. When it comes to fruit, berries are among the healthiest because of their antioxidant levels. Although some fruits are higher in sugar than others, it is hard to go wrong with any kind of fruit, especially if you are aiming for a 2:1 ratio of veggies to fruit. Fresh fruit is an easy and portable snack. Keep frozen berries on hand to toss into smoothies. ~ over ~



6. Love your gut: the science is clear that health (or disease) often begins in the gut. Our microbiome plays a role in autoimmune disease, obesity, cancer, allergies, and much more. Fermented foods, like sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, miso, and yogurt contain good bacteria. Many foods—like onions, garlic, artichokes, asparagus, and beans—contain prebiotics, or the indigestible fibers that feed the good bacteria in the gut. Including probiotic and prebiotic foods or supplements in your diet is a big part of keeping the “good bacteria” in a happy balance. Also, you will need to make sure your digestive system is creating enough acids and enzymes to digest your food. If you suffer from any kind of digestive issues such as heartburn, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, etc. it is imperative to get these issues resolved. A nutritional exam as it is performed as part of a health evaluation at the Evergreen Spa & Wellness Center will help determine your nutritional needs. “All diseases begin in the gut.” This profound statement of Hippocrates, “father of medicine”, was made more than 2,000 years ago. There is a close connection between immunity and our gut flora. In fact, about 84% of our immunity is located in the gut wall. There are several factors in our modern world that can damage the gut flora including the modern junk food diet, prolonged periods of stress, infections, radiation and other environmental influences. **7. Mind your food:** most of us are caught up in multi-tasking all day long and don’t treat our mealtimes with the respect they deserve by simply being mindful. Allow your senses to become completely absorbed in your food—smelling, touching, seeing, tasting, chewing slowly and savoring every bite. Giving yourself permission to slow down—especially during mealtimes—will help you to get back in touch with yourself. **8. Manage stress and anxiety:** stress makes us less likely to get enough sleep, and more likely to eat unhealthy food on the run. But other physical reactions to stress cause weight gain. One is the stress hormone cortisol, which is directly linked with increased abdominal obesity, and particularly harmful types of fat that build up around the stomach and intestines. In studies, cortisol has been directly linked with increased appetite, cravings for sugar and weight gain. One of the most effective ways to learn to manage stress is through meditation and breathing exercises. You can also support your body’s stress management capabilities with herbs. Numerous studies found that ashwaghandha root helps improve stress responses. Ginseng, holy basil and rhodiola are also recommended for stress management. **9. Get enough sleep:** sleep is one of the most critical factors to control weight, because it affects two key hormones: Ghrelin, which triggers our bodies to stimulate appetite, is increased in sleep-deprived people; while leptin, the satiety-inducing hormone, is reduced. Recent studies found that those who slept 6.5 hours a night or less experienced hormonal changes that could affect future body weight and impair long-term health. Sleep deficit is also strongly linked to Alzheimer’s and dementia. You will find many herbal remedies at the Evergreen Cottage.

Obesity is directly linked to heart disease, diabetes, cancer, depression, and impotency. Obesity actually changes the character of fat cells, how they metabolize, and how they affect our genes. With obesity comes inflammation. It is inflammation of a chronic nature that leads to the changes in our bodies that create degenerative diseases. Fat cells literally explode when they get too large. This causes the release of toxins and creates disease. Unfortunately, even 10 pounds of extra fat located in the torso has a negative effect on your health. To get an idea if you are carrying excess fat in your torso area, measure your waist. An ideal waist size is less than 30 inches for women and 35 inches for men. Excessive fat in the body causes inflammation, accelerates aging, creates “dulling” of brain function and potentially Alzheimer’s (called Type 3 Diabetes). In a study, the brains of obese people looked 16 years older than their healthy counterparts. Furthermore, excessive body fat opposes insulin so that we gain more weight and develop diabetes, potentiates the stress hormone so that we deal less effectively with stress, weakens the immune system and disrupts appetite so you feel hungry all the time. Obesity significantly affects the quality of your life and life span.

DRINK APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

Numerous studies have found apple cider vinegar able to help regulate blood sugar swings and to reduce blood sugar spikes after eating. When blood sugar rises and swings rapidly, it causes a number of effects, including increased cravings for food, fatigue and reduced insulin sensitivity—a precursor of diabetes. To find out if those effects directly led to weight loss, Japanese researchers investigated the effects of vinegar on body fat mass in obese subjects in a double-blind trial. At the end of the study, body weight, BMI, visceral fat area, waist circumference and serum triglyceride levels were all significantly reduced in groups ingesting vinegar compared with a placebo group. Furthermore, apple cider vinegar has been shown to help increase the nutrition we receive from food by improving digestion. Simply drink a teaspoon of organic apple cider vinegar in a glass of water in the morning, or immediately before or after meals. Apple cider vinegar also improves circulation and helps eliminate toxins.

A healthy weight comes from a healthy lifestyle. There are no “tricks” or shortcuts. Let me help you discover the best program for your body and your genetic makeup. Long journeys are accomplished by taking one step at a time. The road to health can be a long journey but I am here to help and remind you to hit your refresh button every once in a while. May your new year be a journey filled with many wonderful accomplishments and progress!

Organic Roots  Bistro

BUSINESS HOURS:

TUESDAY— SATURDAY 9:30 AM—5:30 PM
Closed Sunday & Monday