

Six Easy Ways to Improve Your Health and Well-Being



January 2020

More than half of all New Year's resolutions fail, but this year, yours do not have to. Here are six easy (and free) resolutions you can start doing today:

1. Lose five to 10 pounds

Nearly all of us could stand to lose a little weight, and even five or 10 pounds can make a significant difference to our health. Losing weight can improve blood pressure, lower cholesterol, help regulate blood sugar levels, and make it easier to exercise.

2. Quit smoking

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of premature death in the United States. If you're still smoking or using tobacco products and have made the decision to quit, there are [resources](#) available to help.

With Iowa Choice and National Choice, every plan year you get a no-cost stop-tobacco appointment with your doctor, and two free 90-day treatments that make you six times more likely to succeed every time you try to quit.

3. Find simple ways to exercise

When was the last time you parked in the far corner of the parking lot? Or took the stairs instead of the elevator? These simple things can help promote a continually active lifestyle.

4. Eat one more serving of fruit and one more serving of vegetables each day

Most of us have a hard time dieting, and one of the main reasons is we feel restricted in what we can – and can't – eat. One way to ease into healthier food habits is to simply include more fruits and vegetables into your diet.

Fruits and vegetables generally have no fat, and are high in fiber, vitamins, and other nutrients. Add a salad or include fresh or frozen vegetables with your dinner entrée. Fresh fruit can be incorporated into your diet as part of breakfast or as snacks throughout the day. For more valuable nutrition information, visit <https://www.wellmark.com/blue/nutrition>.

5. Keep track of your preventive exams

Many of us do not receive the preventive medical services we should. Start with an annual physical exam with your primary care provider. Other services (depending on your age) include screenings for breast, prostate and colon cancers; blood testing to monitor cholesterol and blood sugar levels; and getting an annual flu shot.

The State's health plan provides coverage for [preventive services](#) with no member cost share when delivered by in-network providers.

6. Volunteer

Volunteering won't necessarily help you lose weight, exercise more, or eat right. It does, however, contribute to your sense of purpose, which in turn can improve relationships, your community, and your overall outlook on life.
