

10 WAYS TO KICK-START A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Establishing the motivations behind your desire to get healthy can help you set realistic, attainable goals for your Wealth + HealthSM.

1

When your willpower is strong, plan exercise or a healthy meal to prepare ahead of time. That way you aren't making last-minute, unhealthy decisions when your willpower is waning.¹

2

Keep a "lifestyle log" to help track your eating patterns and figure out nutritional food choices that work well for you.

3

Get cooking. Expand your healthy recipe repertoire by finding a few favorite dishes. Choose a day when you have time to prepare food for the week. Chop vegetables for soup and freeze some portions of your main dishes so you'll have easy meals later on. It will help you stick with your eating plan and avoid takeout and fast food. It's also better for your wallet.

4

Make quick and easy sweet snacks like roasted plantains as an alternative to packaged chips to make your snacking healthier and less expensive.

5

Get social. Gathering with friends for a healthy meal or finding a partner for exercising or eating light keeps you encouraged. A little support goes a long way in helping you reach your goals.

6

Get active at the office. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Arrange for more frequent, shorter breaks to take walks or do stretches. If you have access to a gym at your workplace, take advantage of it before work or during a lunch break.

7

Have a gym bag or yoga mat ready for heading to an exercise class. That makes it easier to stick to your physical activity plan.

8

Use household budgeting to track your monthly income and expenses. Consider a budget worksheet, either on a spreadsheet or with old-fashioned paper and pencil. It can help you plan for paying off debt, saving for a special trip, or retirement.

9

Make an emergency savings account a priority. Having at least six months of living expenses in savings provides a safety net for when a major unexpected expense comes along, such as a job loss, a car breakdown, or a health problem.²

10

Remember to allow yourself downtime to relax and reduce stress. Stress can lead to overeating, excessive drinking, and sleep deprivation — all risk factors in high blood pressure, weight gain, and obesity.²

¹"How to Boost Your Willpower to Help Make Healthy Choices Easy," American Heart Association 2018

²"Simple Steps To Build Sustainable Healthy Habits," American Heart Association, 2019