



December

# Member Newsletter



## Renew Your Course for Better Health

- **Redefine why you want to reset your course.** Maybe you want to get stronger to play with your kids or exert yourself without getting winded, have your clothes fit better, lower your blood pressure, or just feel less stagnant and stuck. Identifying your “why” can lead to making a solid plan to reach your goal.
- **Look for novel ways to get active physically and mentally.** Consider a guided nature walk sponsored by your local parks and recreation department, or attend free local art workshops, cooking demos, yoga drop-ins, etc. This could be the refreshing spark to help jump-start your quest for better well-being.
- **Tackle only one healthy goal at a time, and go slow to build your habit.** Break your goal into small, manageable steps that are measurable. This might mean plotting an increasingly longer walking routine, starting with just a 10-minute jaunt around your neighborhood.
- **Forget willpower—create a routine to keep you on course!** For example, carve out a regular time for your walk around your neighborhood to occur right after your morning coffee or midday break, so it becomes a habit.
- **Create habits you can truly keep—try healthy swaps.** As an example: swap seltzer for soda, saving you over 20 grams of sugar. For more ideas, visit: <https://chear.ucsd.edu/blog/10-ways-to-make-lifestyle-changes-easy>
- **Make getting healthy enticing!** Want to start exercising? Get some snazzy sneakers and lively workout gear that make you want to move!
- **Buddy up.** Pair up with someone who is ready, willing and committed to a healthier course and can help keep you accountable.
- **Start tracking!** Whether you use a habit tracker app, a journal or make a simple mark on your calendar, it's gratifying and motivating to see your progress.

## Secrets to Sound Sleep

Sleep is important to your overall health and well-being. Sleep helps the body and brain recharge themselves for the next day by recharging your body and your brain. Getting a good night's sleep, not only do you feel physically better, you also feel better at solving problems, coping with stress, controlling your emotions, and processing and retaining information. This evening while preparing for bed, consider the following secrets to sound sleep.

**Go to bed at the same time** each night and wake up at the same time each morning. Getting at least 7 hours of sleep is recommended. Some people need more than 8 hours of sleep to meet sleep recommendations. Consistent sleep patterns every day can help you feel better.

**Make your bedroom a sleep-friendly bedroom.** A dark, quiet bedroom promotes sleep through the night.

**Eat and drink smartly.** Be sure not to consume any caffeinated drinks or foods close to bedtime. Limit alcohol and heavy foods. Limit the amount of liquid you drink before bedtime to prevent middle-of-the-night trips to the bathroom.

**Follow a bedtime routine.** By doing the same activities each night before bed, you can train your body to wind down in preparation for sleep.

**Turn off your electronics.** The light, noise and stimulation from electronics—including TVs and cell phones—can keep you from getting a full night's rest.

**Address your stress before bedtime** for more restful sleep. Stress from the day can become overwhelming and make it difficult to quiet your mind.

Keep a journal to track your sleep patterns each night, what time you wake up, and why you wake up. This can help you identify any patterns in your sleep, or what is causing you to stay awake or unable to sleep. This can help you to identify any changes you may need to make to improve your sleep.

**Many people occasionally have a poor night's sleep** or trouble getting to sleep, but if you frequently suffer from sleep issues, contact your primary care physician. Your doctor can take steps to identify and treat underlying causes of sleep problems.



### Safe Toys and Gifts Month

If you're shopping for kids' toys, make sure they are safe and the toy is right for a child's age and skill level. Read labels. Check if the toys have passed a safety inspection by "ASTM," the American Society for Testing and Materials standards. Fabric toys should be labeled flame retardant or flame resistant. Painted toys must use lead-free paint. Crayons and paints should be "non toxic." Avoid toys with ropes, sharp edges, heating elements, loud horns or noises, or that have small parts like magnets or small button batteries that can be

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