

## **Goals for a Healthier You in 2021**

*By Dr. Chris Mulvey, PT*

The Freshman 15 may be more myth than reality, but it’s an expression that has stood strong for generations.

Unfortunately, 2020 introduced us to another phenomenon – the Quarantine 15... or more.

We didn’t intend to gain weight, but it happened. COVID-19 forced us to spend more time at home, where we snacked, watched TV and generally just sat idle. With fitness centers and parks closed for a time, we couldn’t get regular exercise. Many medical offices canceled routine, non-emergency visits, preventing us from our annual checkups.

Needless to say, our bodies didn’t fare well in 2020.

New year, new you.

We can start 2021 on the right foot. Don’t make a New Year’s resolution, though. Make a New You resolution.

A survey from YouGov, an international research firm, found that 50% of resolutions related to the desire to exercise more. Fitness is part of the equation, but New You resolutions should be about wellness. FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers defines wellness as the cornerstone of healthy living. Wellness bridges physiology, exercise and nutrition to help patients feel younger, live pain-free and achieve the pinnacle of healthy living.

A New You resolution has four components.

### **Exercise**

Fitness centers sell more memberships in January than any other month. Unfortunately, many of those who join gyms are gone a month or two later.

Wellness centers, like those offered by FYZICAL, offer a medical approach to fitness. Personal trainers and physical therapists aren't focused on the vanity aspects of exercise, like building bigger biceps or reducing waistlines. Instead, they want patients to be healthy. That means different things to different people, and exactly why it is so important to have an individualized wellness plan.

## **Lifestyle**

Many individuals cut back or eliminate smoking and drinking alcohol as a resolution. That's a great start to living a healthier lifestyle.

There are so many other ways to living a healthy lifestyle, though. You can take a brisk walk after lunch or dinner, or take the stairs instead of the elevator. You can stand up and stretch for two minutes during commercial breaks. You can plan nutritious meals to make sure you're not scrambling at dinnertime. You can focus on good posture, which can prevent excess strain on muscles, joints and the spine, as well as increase productivity and enhance mood.

## **Diet**

Nutritional health is critically important as we age. Our metabolism can no longer quickly burn off that slice of pizza or cheesecake that we enjoyed. We all learned the food pyramid in elementary school, but many people go a meal, or an entire day, without a single vegetable or fruit touching their plates. Pay attention to the food groups. Food fuels our bodies, so skipping certain items is depriving your body of valuable vitamins, minerals and nutrients.

Food also contributes to medical issues. The role of sugar and carbs in relation to diabetes is well known, but other types of foods can trigger certain medical conditions, like heartburn, acid reflux and indigestion.

## Doctors

Physicians are our partners in health. Medical insurance covers wellness visits and regular checkups because they are effective at spotting potential issues before they become health problems.

Make annual appointments with these types of doctors: primary care physician, dentist, physical therapist, OBGYN or urologist, dermatologist, optometrist and otolaryngologist. Individuals with prior medical conditions, like cancer, high blood pressure or strokes, also should see specialists that treat these types of illnesses.

A New You resolution, one that you actually follow, offers the best way to love your life in 2021, and beyond.



### About the Author

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