

- Eating customs**STICK TO THAT RESOLUTION: TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHIER**

Philippine Daily Inquirer · 21 Jan 2025 · C2

According to Herbalife's "New Year, New Me" survey, close to 66 percent of Filipinos polled revealed that they have made New Year's resolutions to take better care of their health in 2025. But staying on track can be daunting.



Dr. Vipada Sae Lao, Herbalife's nutrition education and training lead for Asia Pacific, shares some recommendations to help you achieve your goals.

- Set specific and realistic goals. Do not commit to an extreme diet or set unrealistic expectations. Set small achievable goals that you can gradually build upon. If you are trying to cut out junk food from your daily diet, start by replacing one unhealthy snack in the day with a healthier option. Consistency wins over intensity. Over time, these smaller goals will add up to big change without the feeling of deprivation.
- Balance is your new mantra. Healthy eating is simply about getting that right balance. Get those colorful fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, healthy fats, and whole grains on a plate for a fitter you. Start the day with a high-protein breakfast—about 25 grams should do it. Include some protein at every meal and snack. This will help satisfy hunger over the course of the day and can ensure your protein needs are met. Remember that protein requirements vary with your body size, composition, age, and even activity levels.
- Don't fall for the fads. Fad diets often facilitate fast and easy weight loss, leading people to believe they are working. However, studies suggest there are negative health consequences of longterm adherence to such limiting dietary patterns.

Pay attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues rather than chasing a rigid diet plan. That stomach rumble, dip in energy levels, slight brain fog or crankiness are all common signs of your body telling you to fuel up. It helps to practice portion control and stop eating when you are 80 percent full. Mindful eating helps you pay attention to how your body feels, assessing when you have had sufficient food. Weight loss is a great goal, but eating right and maintaining an active lifestyle is the ideal way to achieve a healthy mind and body.

- Track your progress. If you can feel a difference in your body but are not sure, track it. Fitness apps can help chart your course. Share your fitness goals and plans to eat healthy with your friends and family. It's harder to stay on track if you are tackling it on your own. Devel-

oping a support system of people who know your goals, strengths, and weaknesses can be extremely beneficial in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Find your support community that can help you, particularly when you feel you're losing momentum.

- Focus on the long term rather than quick fixes. You don't need to completely give up your favorite foods, just try and find healthier versions of them. Simple swaps, such as whole-grain bread instead of white, baked or grilled foods instead of fried, and avocado or hummus to replace mayonnaise, can help reduce calories and improve the nutritional value of your meals without you feeling deprived.

Similarly, a bout of exercise can suppress hunger hormones and reduce your appetite. But in order to sustain your activity, your body needs proper fuel. Ensure you are not cutting back too much on your calories in a bid to lose weight, as that could leave you low on energy and unable to keep to your exercise regime. Fuel up adequately before and after your workouts.

- Stay positive. Went through a pint of ice cream? It's alright. Shake it off and get back on track tomorrow. Encouraging yourself when you reach certain milestones on your journey is another way to guarantee good habits stick longer. If you have been able to stay off junk or processed food for three months, treat yourself to a massage or even a weekend holiday. "Eating healthy is all about making mindful choices that you can sustain and integrate into your daily routine. Remember, it's not about perfection—it's about making consistent, healthy choices that become second nature over time," said Dr. Vipada.