

# RESOLVE TO DO MORE IN 2019

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## Introduction

As the first week of 2019 zooms by, I've found myself reflecting on past resolutions and their success or failure, and their real impact on my life. Whether it's to work out more, or eat more vegetables, new year's resolutions almost always tend to revolve around health improvement. We make these goals each year with good intentions, but statistically never meet them; 80-92% of resolutions ending in disappointment. This year, instead of making outlandish health goals and likely failing, consider making small steps that will lead to big health changes, and noticeable differences by 2020.

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## Ditch the diet

Total diet change is the true kicker to all weight loss resolution success, leaving most without a clue and some with increased numbers on the scale. Without guidance from your doctor or a dietitian, total diet changes can be challenging, frustrating, and potentially risky to your health. To rather improve your health, instead of hurting it, stop googling and start with small food swaps that will leave you satiated and free from restriction-induced binging; soda for fruit infused water, white bread for whole grains, the bag of chips for well-balanced snack foods, and Friday night Domino's Pizza for a homemade pizza customized by you.

## Eat more kale

Kale, you see it at the grocery store, you might bring it home with you, and then what? Kale, a beautiful leafy green, is incredibly nutrient dense and therefore beneficial to its consumers in any quantity and in any form. Not only does kale have heart-protective and anti-inflammatory properties, this vegetable is also known to boost one's immune system. Did you know that there is more vitamin C in a cup of kale than in an orange? With a lower risk of sickness, new year's resolutions are bolstered by the positive health effects of eating more kale.

## Workout your emotions

As going to the gym is high on everyone's resolution list as working out often leads to improved fitness, it is important to also consider the mental health benefits reaped from adopting a regular workout schedule. In a study conducted at Duke University, researchers found no differences in mood improvement between those taking antidepressants without exercise and those engaging in an aerobic exercise program and not taking medication <sup>1</sup>. So if getting to the gym is always a struggle, consider the post-workout inevitable bliss that will make it all worth it.

## Give back

Many of our resolutions tend to be intrinsic, but giving to one's community is equally, if not more important to making long-lasting change in 2019. With the Academy's focus on malnutrition, it is paramount to community health that we donate and support local food shelves and advocate for greater food access through participation in local government and responding to various call-to-actions. Though food insecurity may not be on your radar, it remains a reality for more Americans than it should. In 2019, resolve to improve the health of your community through volunteerism and activism.

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1. Blumenthal JA, Babyak MA, Moore KA, et al. Effects of exercise training on older patients with major depression. *Arch Intern Med.* 1999; 159(19):2349-56