



Conifer Physical Therapy

Happy New Year! With a new year comes the New Year's resolutions. Many of you are probably already wondering "how long will I be able to keep my resolutions this year?" To kick off the first Conifer Physical Therapy blog I wanted to give some advice on how you can keep your New Year's resolutions this year with three easy tips.

The first tip I have is to write your resolutions down. When we

put things in writing it forms a connection in the brain helping it solidify into long term memory. Also, when it is written down you can place it somewhere in your house where you will see it frequently triggering your brain to initiate a response. Put it in strategic places like the fridge, your bathroom mirror, or even a little Post-it in your car. These frequent reminders are simple suggestions that will help keep your goals front and center during your daily routines.

The second tip is to make the resolutions measurable. Instead of saying I want to exercise more, drink less soda, or eat healthier food; make your resolution to go to the gym 3 days per week, to drink only one soda per week, or eat well balanced meals 4 days per week. When your goals are measurable it is easier to track your progress and see how close you are to achieving your goals. By making your resolution measurable you are making it more specific. This is where most people miss the boat when it comes to New Year's resolutions. Their resolutions are not precise enough and this allows them wiggle room enabling them to keep procrastinating or pushing their goals to the side.

A third tip is to make multiple smaller more manageable resolutions. You might be thinking if I make too many resolutions then I won't be able to follow all of them. When all the small resolutions work in concert towards one BIG goal, this distributes the workload helping to simplify your plan increasing the likelihood of success. Also, when you accomplish one of the small resolutions, you can celebrate which will inspire you to persevere throughout the year and accomplish your further resolutions.

Here is an example of how to put all three tips together. If you want to lose weight this year, then write down how much weight you want to lose. Next, develop a plan with small goals to pursue. You might decide to work on exercise habits as one of your small goals. Remember to focus on the process and slowly increase your activity level gradually throughout the year. Start by exercising one or two times per week and gradually build up to 3-5 days per week. The American College of Sports Medicine, ACSM, recommends 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week to help decrease weight gain and 250 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week to help lose weight. In addition, The Centers for Disease Control recommends losing 1-2 pounds per week to promote safe and healthy weight loss.

Remember, as you progress on this journey of becoming healthier you will have ups and downs. For example, if you are doing strength training, you will most likely gain some weight; this is normal as you keep building muscle. Finally, don't forget to celebrate your accomplishments along the way and then begin working on your other small goals.

If you have any questions on how to reach any goals that you have for your health this year feel free to ask any of the physical therapists at Conifer Physical Therapy. We are here to support you in living a healthy lifestyle!

-Tyler Compton, PT, DPT, ACSM EP-C

Tyler Compton is a physical therapist at Conifer Physical Therapy. He earned his Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Southwest Baptist University and his B.S. in Nutrition and Fitness from the University of Missouri. He is also a Certified Exercise Physiologist by the American College of Sports Medicine.



Conifer Therapy

Tips to keep your New Year's Resolutions!

- **Write them down!**
 - Put them on a Post-It and place them in places that you frequently see
 - Bathroom mirror, refrigerator, car steering wheel
- **Make them measurable and specific!**
 - Not I want to exercise more.
 - I want to exercise 30 minutes per day; 4 days per week.
 - Track your progress.
- **Expect slip ups!**
 - There will be times when you falter.
 - Go back to your reasons for your resolutions and take time to reflect on those.
 - Keep looking at reminders to help reduce slip ups.
- **Focus on the process!**
 - Rome wasn't built in a day and you won't lose 20 pounds in a day either.
 - Make smaller goals that reflect the big goals.
 - Big goal: exercise 5 days per week
 - Smaller goals: start exercising 1-2 times per week
 - Increase to 2-3 days gradually
 - Then 4-5 days
- **Exercise recommendations**
 - Aerobic and Resistance training.
 - Aerobic exercise: walking, biking, elliptical, swimming, hiking, running.
 - ACSM recommendations
 - 30-60 minutes of moderate intensity activity 5 days per week
 - 20-60 minutes of vigorous intensity activity 2-3 days per week
 - Resistance training: weights, resistance bands, body weight exercises.
 - ACSM recommendations
 - 2-3 days per week
 - 2-4 sets of 10-15 repetitions
 - One day of rest between resistance training sessions
 - Start with lower intensity and increase duration/repetitions before intensity to help reduce risk of injury.



RPE Scale

(Rate of Perceived Exertion)

1	Very Light Activity (anything other than complete rest)
2-3	Light activity (feels like you can maintain for hours, easy to breath and carry on a conversation)
4-5	Moderate Activity (feel like you can exercise for long periods of time, able to talk and hold short conversations)
6-7	Vigorous Activity (on the verge of becoming uncomfortable, short of breath, can speak a sentence)
8-9	Very Hard Activity (difficult to maintain exercise intensity, hard to speak more than a single word)
10	Max Effort (feels impossible to continue, completely out of breath, unable to talk)