

Purpose to stay healthy in 2018

While pledging to "be healthier" in 2018 is a brave goal, it is not likely to get you very far. But if you instead focus on smaller, more manageable and fun targets, you may achieve just that.

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Many people have an inevitable habit of coming up with resolutions at the beginning of every year. It is like starting the next 12 months on a fresh page. Among the several resolutions people make is staying healthy. It is probably why we have seen more people starting to exercise as well as being mindful of the food they eat. Here are other ways you can be vigilant of your health during the course of the year.

Prioritise on exercising

Have your friends of late made several whispers about you gaining weight? Or do you sometimes look back on your old photos and wonder how you lost yourself over the years? You have the opportunity to redeem your image in the next 12 months. How? Set time away from your busy schedule to exercise.

Ivan Ssentamu, a fitness trainer, says one does not need to pay for gym membership in order to exercise. "You can exercise right from the comfort of your home," Ssentamu says.

Some of the fitness routines Ssentamu says can be done at home include skipping rope (jumping), doing squats, push-ups and dancing, among others. In case you get busy during



Go for regular doctor's checkups even when you are not feeling sick. NET PHOTOS

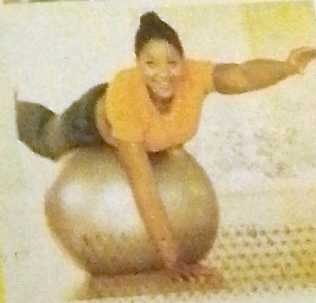
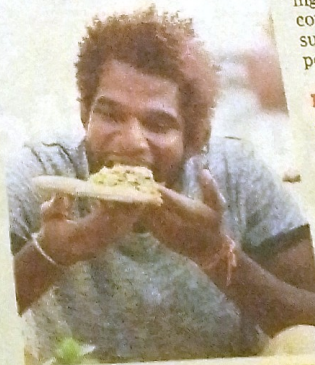
the weekdays, utilise the weekends instead for doing your exercises.

Eleanor Babiry, a banker is one of such women who utilises her Saturday and Sunday mornings to jog outside Namboole stadium. According to Babiry, she always meets a number of other people exercising as well and this boosts her morale.

Time your meals

If you are planning on losing weight this year, you should observe the quantity of the meals you consume and the time you take them.

"You may have a heavy breakfast and lunch. Then, when it comes to supper, you may decide to take smaller food portions at least three



hours before bed time," Jamiru Mpiima, a dietician at Family Nutritionist Uganda says.

However, for those who want to gain weight, Mpiima suggests eating larger food portions during the course of the day and not to skip supper as long as you eat smaller

Regular healthy checkups

Are you one of those people who visit the doctor only when you feel unwell? For the new year, purpose to visit a health facility from time to time and have a doctor carry out a full checkup even when you feel fine. Some conditions when caught early can be treated easily. It is also good because the doctor will give advise on which areas of your life you need to pay extra attention to.

For instance, Monica Katushabe's life was saved after a routine checkup detected a lump in a right breast. "I was surprised the doctor detected a small tumour after performing an ultra-breast scan. Previously, I had not been experiencing any unusual symptoms such as discharge or pain," Katushabe says.

When a biopsy (extraction of sample of the lump for examination) was done, the results showed

the lump was cancerous. The 30 year old was immediately put on treatment including chemotherapy and eventually, she beat the cancer. Katushabe says her life was saved because of the routine checkup.

Besides cancer, Dr Alex Kakoraki of Murchison Bay Hospital, Luzira says it is important that both men and women do other health general checks ups for other crucial ailments including HIV/ Aids, diabetes, Hepatitis B.

In addition, they should check their blood pressure as well as have tests conducted on their liver and heart, kidney functions. Also, Kakoraki reminds parents to always take their children for immunisation as required and thereafter do follow-ups on their weight, eating and sleeping habits.

Mindful eating

There is an old adage that says: "you are what you eat," which means that our bodies reflect the kind of food we consume. An interesting quote from the book, *Mindful Eating, Mindful Life* by Thich Nhat Hanh and Dr. Lillian Cheung notes, "mindful eating begins with our choice of what to eat and drink. We want to choose foods and drinks that are good for our health, in the modest portions that will help us control our weight. Yet there are so many types of foods and drinks, and so much information about nutrition and diet plans that we find it difficult to make the right choices."

The book recommends that a good way of overcoming this challenge is to know quite a bit of what to eat and drink and what not to eat and drink to prevent chronic diseases. And since nutrients found in foods, all one needs a few guidelines on maintaining their health and well-being.

Harmful habits

These include taking drugs, drinking alcohol, smoking as well as having more than one sexual partner. "Some of these habits including drinking alcohol have the potential to ruin our long run," says Margaret, a social worker.

In case you are already in any of the harmful habits, she advises seeking professional counselling and rehabilitation.

Teeth discolouration is of the aging process. Like wrinkles, many people fight it. While you can't change your teeth to change over the years, try things you can do to prevent stains and emb discoloration.

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SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE

The people we often associate make or break us. If surround yourself with negative or destructive people, there are always likely chances that you will end up being like them.

For instance if they are taking drugs, you may become a drug addict as well. On the other hand, surrounding yourself with optimistic minded people has a number of benefits including health, emotional, spiritually and psychological. For instance, if you are trying to loose weight, befriend people who will be positive and give advise especially when you want to go off track.