

Take It One Step at a Time

You may already know what you need to do to achieve your vision and, yet, taking action may be a bit intimidating. Whatever your vision entails, it can be achieved by taking one step at a time, no matter how small. On some days, your “step” might be as small as one minute of exercise or one less bite of food at each meal.

Using the space provided, you are invited to define five small steps that you could take to move toward your vision. Then, put a star next to each step you are willing to take now and each and every day.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

For added inspiration, remember to check out www.smallstep.gov. You can receive small step suggestions, healthy recipes and tips for raising a healthy family. You can also track your activity and read stories about others' success.

Practice Makes Progress

Success in achieving your vision has a lot to do with persistence. In addition to committing to your vision and taking one step at a time, the final step is to practice, practice, practice. Practice doesn't make perfect... practice makes progress.

Each day, recommit to your vision. Use tools, such as goal setting and planning, positive thinking, journaling and visualization to help you. You are also encouraged to continue monitoring your weight, physical activity and food choices. For times when your behavior falls short of your intentions, simply recommit and persist. Don't waste time beating yourself up.

Helpful Highmark Resources

As you move toward your vision and live by the philosophy of 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up, take advantage of Highmark's many programs and resources available to you online, at your worksite or in your community. From weight management to disease management, Highmark programs can help you achieve your vision for health & wellness. Go to www.highmark.com to learn about everything Highmark offers.

Today's date: _____
 My current weight: _____

Share your Experience

It has been more than two months since you made a commitment to maintain your weight this holiday season. Congratulations for following through on your commitment by participating in Maintain Don't Gain: 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up!

When it becomes available to you, you are invited to share your thoughts about and experience by completing the Follow-up Survey. Your input ensures that future programs are created to meet your needs and interests.

HEART-WARMING RECIPES FOR THE WINTER SEASON

Even though the holiday season is over, wintertime offers more opportunities for gathering with friends, family, and mouth-watering food. Add these warming recipes to your repertoire and continue living in a spirit of balance, joy and good cheer.

The Best Bean Chili

Number of Servings: 8

1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
 1 large onion, diced (or 1 cup frozen diced onion)
 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 1 red or green bell pepper, diced (or 1 cup frozen diced green bell pepper)
 1 can diced green chilies
 1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
 1 (15 ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
 1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
 1 (6 ounce) can tomato puree
 1/2 cup water
 1/2 cup uncooked lentils
 2 teaspoons ground cumin
 2 tablespoons molasses
 2 tablespoons baking cocoa powder
 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, to taste
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

In a large pot or deep skillet, sauté onions, garlic, and bell pepper oil over medium heat. Add remaining ingredients and simmer for 30 to 60 minutes.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 365 calories, 3g total fat, 14.5g dietary fiber, 16g protein, 48g carbohydrate, 244mg sodium

Spicy Beef & Lentil Stew

Number of Servings: 4

2 (14-1/2 ounce) cans no-salt-added stewed tomatoes
 3 cups water
 1/2 pound well-trimmed beef bottom round, cut into 1-inch dice
 8 ounces lentils, rinsed and picked over
 1 large sweet potato (12 ounces), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
 1 medium onion, cut into wedges
 1 to 2 tablespoons minced fresh red or green chili peppers, to taste
 2 teaspoons thyme
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
 3 bay leaves

1. In large saucepan, combine stewed tomatoes, water, beef, lentils, sweet potato, onion, half the minced chili peppers, thyme, salt, black pepper and bay leaves. Cover and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until flavors are blended and lentils are tender, about 40 minutes.
2. With slotted spoon, remove about 1-1/2 cups of stew (but no meat) and puree in a blender or food processor. Return puree to stew and stir to combine. Remove and discard bay leaves. Stir in remaining minced chili peppers and serve.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 415 calories, 6.4g total fat, 23g dietary fiber, 30g protein, 60g carbohydrate, 347mg sodium

HEART-WARMING RECIPES FOR THE WINTER SEASON

Moroccan Lamb Stew

Number of Servings: 4

1/2 cup dried apricots
 1 cup boiling water
 2 teaspoons olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
 1/2 teaspoon paprika
 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 large onion, diced
 1 cup thinly sliced carrots
 2/3 cup thinly sliced parsnips
 1/3 cup canned chicken broth diluted with 1/3 cup water
 3/4 pound well-trimmed lean lamb, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 1 (8-ounce) can no-salt-added tomato sauce
 1 cup canned chick-peas, rinsed and drained
 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1. In small heatproof bowl, combine apricots and boiling water. Set aside to soften. Reserving soaking liquid, drain apricots and coarsely chop.
2. In flameproof casserole or Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat. Stir in cinnamon, ginger, paprika, turmeric and pepper, and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in onion, carrots, parsnips and broth, and cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables have softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in lamb and cook until lamb is no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Stir chopped apricots, 1/4 cup of reserved soaking liquid, tomato sauce, chick-peas, salt and cilantro into stew and cook until lamb is cooked through and vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in lemon juice and serve.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 295 calories, 7.9g total fat, 6.9g dietary fiber, 23g protein, 35g carbohydrate, 378mg sodium

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Chunky Cod & Vegetable Stew

Number of Servings: 4

2 ounces Canadian bacon, cut into very thin strips
 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/2 cup dry white wine
 8 ounces sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
 3/4 cup canned crushed tomatoes
 1 teaspoon paprika
 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 cup frozen corn kernels
 1 cup frozen peas
 1-1/2 pounds skinless, boneless cod fillets, cut into 1-inch chunks

1. In a Dutch oven or flameproof casserole, combine Canadian bacon, onion, garlic and 1/2 cup of water over medium heat. Cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes until onion is tender. Add wine, increase heat to high, and cook 3 minutes until almost evaporated.
2. Add sweet potato, stirring to coat. Add tomatoes, paprika, hot pepper sauce, salt, and 1 cup of water and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook 5 minutes until sweet potatoes are tender.
3. Stir in corn and peas, place fish on top, cover, and cook 4 to 5 minutes until fish is just opaque.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 327 calories, 2.9g total fat, 5g dietary fiber, 38g protein, 33g carbohydrate, 659mg sodium

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HOLIDAY PARTY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP

Mama's Chicken Stew

Number of Servings: 4

1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
 1/3 cup sliced celery
 3 garlic cloves, minced
 1 cup canned chicken broth diluted with 1 cup water, or 2 cups homemade chicken broth
 1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
 1/2 cup thinly sliced carrots
 1/2 teaspoon thyme
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into 2-inch pieces
 1 pound stemmed spinach, coarsely chopped
 2 teaspoons cornstarch blended with 1 tablespoon water

1. In flameproof casserole or Dutch oven, combine onion, celery, garlic and 1/2 cup of diluted chicken broth. Simmer until onion is tender and liquid has almost evaporated, about 7 minutes.
2. Add sweet potatoes, carrots, thyme, salt, pepper and remaining 1-1/2 cups diluted broth, and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add chicken, cover and cook until chicken and sweet potatoes are tender, about 8 minutes. Stir in spinach and cook until just wilted, about 3 minutes.
4. Stir cornstarch mixture into stew. Bring stew to a boil and cook until sauce is lightly thickened, about 2 minutes.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 306 calories, 6g total fat, 7.3g dietary fiber, 28g protein, 36g carbohydrate, 602mg sodium

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Fish Chowder

Number of Servings: 4

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 large sweet onion, chopped
 2 ribs celery, chopped
 1 cup white or yellow corn
 1 cup green peas and diced carrot (frozen)
 2 medium red-skinned potatoes cut into quarters
 1 pound white, boneless fish filets (Tilapia, cod, haddock, etc.)
 1 (14-ounce) can vegetable stock
 2 cups fat-free half and half
 2 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley (or 1 tablespoon dried parsley)
 1 tablespoon light butter
 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
 2 tablespoons milk with 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1. Heat olive oil in a large Dutch oven and add onion and celery. Sauté until caramelized, then add stock, corn, peas and carrots, potatoes and fish. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to medium. (If fish was frozen, break fish up into pieces once it thaws.)
2. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Add half and half, parsley and butter. Salt and pepper to taste.
3. Combine flour and milk to make a slurry and add to chowder until thickened.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 275 calories, 5g total fat, 4g dietary fiber, 19g protein, 34g carbohydrate, 703mg sodium