



## Are You Resolute About Your Resolutions?

There is logic in the idea that a new year should bring new beginnings, so it isn't surprising that those wishing to make life changes think that this is the time to do so. But is change accomplished simply by making a decision? Apparently not, as any fitness expert will tell you. Every January, the gym becomes overcrowded with newly-determined fitness fanatics that disappear by Valentine's Day.

A University of Hertfordshire study followed 2,000 people who made a two-week resolution and found that those who relied solely on their own willpower failed even before the halfway mark. Only 30 percent of women and 37 percent of men made it to the halfway point (one week) and by the end of two weeks 78 percent had failed. Of those who stuck to their declaration for

the full two weeks, only 26 percent did so based on willpower alone. The rest used techniques such as visualization - imagining what their life would be like having achieved their goal, or relying on the support of friends and family. Those who discussed their plans with family and friends were far more likely to succeed. Studies have also shown that there are differences between how men succeed compared with women. Women achieve greater success when they have social support, whereas men are more successful when they create a solid plan for themselves. While sticking to your resolutions may seem pointless, there are some benefits. Research shows that people who make resolutions are ten times more likely to attain their goals than people who don't make any.

## And The Winner Is....

A recent Washington State University study (1) led by soil science professor John Reganold compared 13 conventional and 13 organic strawberry field pairs, located adjacent to each other to control for soil type and weather patterns. Data was drawn from repeated harvests and the strawberries were harvested, delivered and stored under identical circumstances to duplicate current retail procedures. Organic methods resulted in strawberries with in-



creased antioxidants, vitamin C, and total phenolics- potent phyto-nutrients found in red, blue and purple fruits and vegetables. Organic plants showed fewer instances of post-harvest fungal rots than conventional strawberries, despite the fact that no fungicides were used on the organic fields. This may be due to the fact that the plants were allowed to build a natural immunity, similar to the way we, as humans, build up our immune system the more we are exposed to pathogens (2).

## Cortisol, Stress and Weight

Could chronic stress be sabotaging your weight loss goals? If you've been making an effort to reduce your weight but to no avail, stress could be the culprit.

One of the effects of stress is an increased output of cortisol, an adrenal hormone. The adrenal glands produce three types of "fight or flight" hormones in response to stress: adrenaline (also known as epinephrine), nor-adrenaline, and cortisol. Cortisol is a glucocorticoid, which means that it stimulates the production of glucose, raising blood sugar

levels during periods of stress to provide the energy needed to respond to a situation. The trouble is, however, that cortisol is intended for emergencies, not for the minor yet insidious day to day stressors we've come to endure. The excessive and ongoing production of cortisol has been linked to increased belly fat and loss of muscle mass. Cortisol actually triggers the body to break down muscle mass into amino acids (single protein units).

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“The toughest part of a diet isn't watching what you eat. It's watching what other people eat.” - Anonymous



## Sweet Potato Chili

This meal makes a great lunch to warm the body during the cold winter months.

- 1-2 tbsp olive oil or rice bran oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped into small pieces
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 ½ tbsp chili powder
- 2 tsp fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 3 tsp fresh oregano or 1 tsp dried
- 3 tsp fresh basil or 1 tsp dried
- 3-4 cups peeled sweet potatoes, chopped into cubes
- 1 can Great Northern Beans, rinsed and drained\*
- 1 can aduki beans, rinsed and drained\*
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp Sucanat
- 3 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 cup corn
- 1 red pepper, seeded and cut into ½ inch pieces.
- 1 zucchini
- Salt and pepper to taste

Optional: 1 jalapeno pepper, chopped into fine pieces. Add at the same time as the chili powder

Sauté the onion in the oil over low to medium heat until soft. Add the garlic and stir in. Add the chili powder and herbs and mix every-



thing together. Add the sweet potato and the beans and stir so they are coated with the chili mixture. Continue to stir over low heat for about 1 minute. Add the apple cider vinegar, Sucanat and broth. Bring to a boil and add the red pepper and corn. Cover and let simmer for half an hour. Cut the zucchini in half, lengthwise and cut each of the halves into quarter inch slices and add to the chili. Simmer for 15 minutes more and serve.

\*1 (14 oz or 390 ml) can of cooked beans equals about 2 cups. Any legume can be used in this recipe. Garbonzo beans can easily substitute for the Great Northern beans and kidney beans can be used instead of the adzuki beans

## Feel Good – Lose Weight?

What substance in the body influences our mood, appetite and cravings? The neurotransmitter Serotonin. What is the precursor to Serotonin? 5-HTP or 5-hydroxytryptophan. With the close link of emotions, appetite and cravings, studies examine the relationship between overeating and 5-HTP levels. One study found 5-HTP supplements resulted in significant weight loss and reduced carbohy-

drate intake in obese adults. As the evidence seems to suggest, taking 5-HTP supplements can curb appetite and cravings as well as or because of the increased satiety reported. Obese women did not show reactions in the blood stream to eating carbohydrates and, so may indicate that these women do not have the serotonin regulated mechanism for appetite and cravings.

## An Alternate Form of Chromium: Chromium Polynicotinate

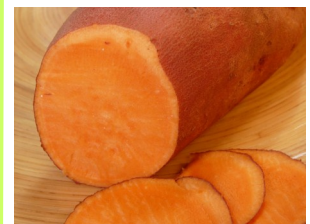
Chromium is an essential mineral known to support the metabolism of carbohydrates, fats and proteins in the body (1). While several forms of chromium are available in supplement form, chromium picolinate, the patented chromium compound combined with tryptophan, has long been the chromium of choice for those—Type II Diabetes in particular—wanting to increase insulin sensitivity and

balanced blood sugar levels (2).

An alternative form of supplemental chromium is quickly gaining momentum. Chromium polynicotinate is the form of chromium bound to the B-Vitamin Niacin. Both chromium picolinate and polynicotinate have been

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*What makes a good recipe that can help control appetite and sustain energy levels? It should have a reasonable number of calories that are delivered steadily over a period of time. Legumes are a great food for stabilizing blood sugar, providing continuous energy and satisfying hunger for several hours. Add sweet potatoes and other vegetables along with delicious herbs, garlic and onions to increase the vitamin, mineral and phytonutrients and you have a nutrient-packed meal.*



*The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), recently ranked a number of vegetables for fiber content, complex carbohydrates protein, vitamin and mineral content. The sweet potato ranked number 1 with a score of 184 over the next highest food, the baked potato at 83. Sweet potatoes are also known for their high polyphenol content which has been shown to decrease oxidative damage from exercise and lower inflammation especially when consumed before a workout (600 mg to 1800 mg).*



## The Best Tips For Achieving Your New Year Goals:

1. Be flexible: A study published in the Journal of Consumer Research found that the more determined subjects were to execute a specific plan, the less likely they were to stick to it, as they often missed other opportunities that might help them accomplish their goals. In other words, think outside of the box.
2. Make specific achievable goals: The decision to "lose weight" is too ambiguous. Instead, state a specific goal, such as "I will lose 10 pounds by the end of March." This goal is more defined and achievable. Once your first goal has been attained, your confidence will increase and you'll be ready to create another simple goal.
3. Be prepared for a relapse: Just because you've fallen off the wagon does not mean that you should continue to sit on the ground. Get back up and try again. Do not use one slip up as an excuse to go back to the old habit. Instead, view it as part of the inevitable process – focus on what caused the relapse and change that circumstance to prevent a further relapse.



"I have metal fillings in my teeth. My refrigerator magnets keep pulling me into the kitchen. That's why I can't lose weight!"

## Cortisol, Stress and Weight

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The liver utilizes these amino acids to make glucose, consequently raising blood sugar levels.

Cortisol's effect on blood sugar often leads to increased cravings for carbohydrates, especially sweets. In a study published in 2001, researchers produced stress-induced eating in female participants by giving them unrealistic time constraints to meet specific expectations. Fifty-nine women were exposed to four consecutive days of three-hour laboratory sessions. The first three sessions were stressful; the fourth was a rest or control session.

Salivary cortisol samples were collected throughout each session. The stressful tasks included puzzles, mathematical formulas, and deliverance of a videotaped speech, with a supposed research committee evaluating participants behind a one-way mirror. Then on the stress-free control session, participants were left alone with a basket of snacks and leisure reading material, unaware that their food intake was being monitored.

Four snack choices were provided in pre-packaged serving sizes, including two high-fat sweet and salty snacks – chocolate granola bars and potato chips, and two low-fat sweet and salty snacks – flavoured sweetened rice cakes and salty pretzels. Cortisol measurements revealed that the participants could be divided into two groups, low cortisol reactivity and high cortisol reactivity. The high

reactors ate significantly more on the stress days compared to low reactors. There was a substantial preference for sweet food among all the participants. This study suggests that those with high cortisol reactivity may be at particular risk of stress-induced eating and weight gain.

Stress can also trigger a condition known as Night Eating Syndrome, indicated by a lack of appetite in the morning, low food intake throughout the day, and fifty per cent or more of the day's calories consumed after 6:00 p.m., followed by difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep. This process results in higher levels of cortisol being produced and is associated with poor weight loss results.

Stress management, therefore, is an important key to successfully managing weight. Learning to slow down, breathe deeply and make time for relaxation and pleasurable experiences (such as a good massage, hot bath or a pleasant walk in nature) can greatly enhance any weight loss program.

If after diffusing the stress, you still desire comfort foods, before reaching for a bag of chips or a chocolate bar, enjoy the delicious bounty of whole foods that nature provides. A delicious trail mix prepared with raw nuts, seeds, and dried fruit, a slice of toasted whole grain bread topped with almond butter and honey, or crunchy whole grain crackers with hummus will satisfy your cravings. Include a relaxing herbal tea and the results might surprise you!

### Nutritional Stress Buster Tips

*Distribute calories throughout the day by eating every 3-4 hours to regulate blood sugar and prevent cravings*

*Begin your day with a protein source*

*Eat some protein at each meal to balance blood sugar*

*1 tbs/day of good quality flax seed oil, hemp oil, fish oil or 1,000-2,000 mgs Omega 3 Supplement in capsules per day*

*Use caffeine strategically. Better yet, replace it with herbal teas, including Siberian ginseng or licorice tea*

*B complex, especially B5 (25-500 mg), B6 (25-300 mg), biotin (100-500 mcg). B vitamins are best taken at smaller doses frequently throughout the day as needed*

*Magnesium (500-100 mg)*

*Take digestive enzymes with food*

*Bach Flower Rescue Remedy*

*Enjoy your love of food ...with food that loves you back*



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## Glucomannan: Fibre Intensive

Dietary fibre continues to shine as one of the successful tools in the prevention of cardiovascular disease and obesity. So, it's not surprising that many products on the market today contain various forms of fibre. Glucomannan is a soluble fibre derived from the root of the konjac plant native to Asia. Many foods in Asia contain Glucomannan, such as noodles and tofu.

Used for weight loss, Glucomannan as a food supplement resulted in significant weight loss as well as a reduction in LDL cholesterol levels. Along with a low-calorie diet, glucomannan was effective for obese patients as opposed to just the low-calorie diet. Studies using glucomannan with obese and severely obese individuals produced positive results in

## A Bean By Any Other Name ...

Canadians love their coffee! If you aren't convinced, take a look at the number of coffee shops lining the streets of Toronto and throughout Canada. So, it should not be surprising that it can be found in supplements too.

Caffeine supplements have long been used to boost energy and to promote weight loss, but other fat-reducing properties besides caffeine reside in the coffee bean.

Chlorogenic acids, organic compounds that act as antioxidants and phenols in coffee, have been shown to promote weight loss in obese mice (2, 5). Green coffee (raw coffee beans) contains high amounts of chlorogenic acid (2), likely more than the amount provided by roasted beans. Research shows that chlorogenic acid may reduce body weight in mice and rats by im-

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found to enhance insulin sensitivity and reduce systolic blood pressure (2).

In terms of weight loss, a study comparing chromium picolinate and polynicotinate supplementation during exercise resulted in greater success with subjects taking the polynicotinate form of chromium (3). Another study testing chromium polynicotinate showed significant fat loss with no muscle loss in overweight women (4).

In terms of absorption, however, research indicates that chromium picolinate is more

terms of compliance, satiety and lipid profile.

As always there is the other side of the coin. Australia banned Glucomannan in tablet form in 1985 because of the potential for inducing lower gastrointestinal obstruction. Capsules and powder forms are still available.

According to a Health Canada advisory January 2010 "The risk to Canadians includes choking and/or blockage of the throat, esophagus or intestine, according to international adverse reaction case reports. **It is also important to note that these products should NOT be taken immediately before going to bed**". For safe use of this product, please take with at least 8 oz. of water.

proving serum glucose levels and insulin, as part of the antioxidant profile of the coffee bean (3, 5). In one study, chlorogenic acid-enriched caffeinated instant coffee resulted in reduced weight in overweight individuals (4).

Some supplements now appearing on health food store shelves contain preparations from decaffeinated green coffee rather than caffeine extracts that have traditionally been used to promote weight loss (1).

Although some studies report weight loss benefits from chlorogenic acids or other compounds alone, one study on mice concluded that neither caffeine nor chlorogenic acid work alone (7).

While ongoing research determines the role of chlorogenic acids in weight loss, occasionally enjoy a cup of green tea or organic cof-

effectively absorbed than the polynicotinate form (8).

While the overall safety of chromium supplementation continues to be debated, some suggesting a possible toxicity risk and DNA damage from the use of chromium picolinate (9-10, 5-6), Health Canada continues to promote chromium for the maintenance of good health and recommends an adult dosage ranging from 2.2 mcg to 500 mcg maximum for people with diabetes (11).

Whether your goal is to balance weight or blood sugar, chromium supplementation is worth exploring.

For reference on articles found in this newsletter, please refer to [www.cahnpro.org](http://www.cahnpro.org)

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