

# Nutrition News

Department of Human Nutrition



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## ***Healthy People 2020* – A Resolution for the New Year and Beyond!**

It's the time of year when we resolve to renew our efforts to take charge of our health. While we as individuals may make (and break!) these goals off and on, annually or weekly, as a nation we are more focused and comprehensive with our health resolutions. Each decade for thirty years, *Healthy People* has established benchmarks and monitored progress over time to encourage collaborations, guide individuals in making informed health decisions, and measure impact of prevention efforts.

*Healthy People 2020* was launched December 2, 2010 with what is described as an "ambitious, yet achievable 10-year agenda for improving the nation's health." The goals are overarching and strive to improve the quality of life of individuals by achieving health equity, eliminating disparities and improving social and physical environments that promote good health for all.

*Healthy People 2020* is the product of stakeholder feedback, including the public, prevention and public health experts; federal, state and

local government officials and thousands of organizations. Thirteen new topic areas are included in this new version of the initiative, including early and middle childhood, adolescent health, older adults, health-related quality of life and well-being and social determinants of health.

Nutrition and Weight Status is one topic area of ongoing focus in *Healthy People 2020*. Twenty-two objectives are listed in this topic area, and Extension educators will find that many — if not most — of the new objectives parallel aspects of current programming efforts. Included in this list are child and household food insecurity; fruit, vegetable and whole grain intake; solid fat and added sugar intake; sodium intake; iron deficiency in children and females, and healthy weight in adults. Obesity in children, adolescents and adults is addressed in the new objectives as well.

Because a major focus of *Healthy People* is data collection, it is possible to determine the nation's progress toward the health goals. In

the last decade, early analyses indicate that the country has moved closer to or met over 70% of its *Healthy People* targets. Meeting the goals can save dollars spent on health, but more importantly, lives. Many chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer, have preventable risk factors addressed through the new health goals and objectives of *Healthy People 2020*.

For more information, go to: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicid=29>

Sources:  
U.S. Health and Human Services. Press release: HHS announces the nation's new health promotion and disease prevention agenda. Retrieved December 6, 2010, from <http://www.hhs.gov/news>

Healthy People 2020 Summary of Objectives. Retrieved December 6, 2010, from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicid=29>

For more information about healthy eating, contact your local extension office. The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call toll-free 1-888-369-4777.

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