

Everyday Strategies for Overcoming Common Weight Loss Barriers

Are you determined to keep your New Year's resolution to lose weight? You are not alone. It is right up there with getting organized and saving more. What is getting in the way? There is no perfect time to lose weight. Decide the right time to be healthier is now.

Recently, we sat down with registered dietitian **Amber Hamilton, RD, LDN** and certified exercise physiologist **Kristina Comstock, EP-C** of CoreLife in Prince Frederick (*see box at right*) to get some practical tips for overcoming common barriers to losing weight.

Staying on Track

"Most people have a problem with consistency ... with staying on track with the right foods and making those healthy changes... and motivation. Those are the biggest challenges," said Hamilton.

She suggests a good first step is to *take stock*. "Take the time to look at what you are truly eating. How many times are you eating out? Are you eating enough throughout the day. Sometimes, undereating will cause you to stick in the same place."

Hamilton advises *making small changes* that are more attainable and set you up for success. "Like giving up those fancy coffee drinks or sodas that add to your caloric intake but do not really add any nutritional value. Or cutting out added sugar. A lot of times that will help with reducing inflammation caused by arthritis."

Making the Time

"There are two things I hear from every single person – that time is an issue and their lack of knowledge is a barrier," said Comstock. Her goal is to teach them how to make the time. "If I tell someone to do 80 squats, it feels out of reach. But if they break it up and do 10 squats per hour while at work, it seems more doable."

"It is about getting in more movement each day... building it into your already busy schedule," she added. "Once you get into the habit, even if you feel you don't have the time, you will find yourself making the time."

Comstock tells her patients to *put it on the calendar*. "Literally, make it an

appointment you must keep and set it to reoccur. Let's say you are working out three times a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. That way, it is already in your calendar before your week gets crazy. It is time you set aside for yourself to get some kind of movement in."

She went on to add, "You have to make time for yourself... you cannot fill from an empty cup."

Be Realistic and Be Specific

If you want this time to be different, Hamilton says you need to choose diet changes you are willing to stick with. "When I develop an eating plan, I try to figure out where they are and meet them there... and adjust their goals as time goes on."

"If they tend to be busy and, on the go," she said. "Their meal plan needs to have time set aside for prepping ahead on the weekend ... even if it is just cooking up the protein because that is what takes the longest. Have everything portioned out so you can grab it and go."

Comstock suggests *setting a start date* but quickly adds, "you have to *know why you want to do this* in the first place. I look at motivation and determination as very different. Successful people are determined. They say they are going to do something and they do it whether they want to or not because they are determined."

"You also have to *be kind to yourself*," said Comstock. "It is about progress not perfection. So, today was day one and you got 10 minutes in. Then, cool. The next day do a little bit more. As soon as you know why, you start to get excited about it."

Comstock recommends making *specific goals*. "We need goals we can measure... I want to walk up the stairs without huffing and puffing. Your why must be something we can check off a list... we did that. And

"Consistency and determination are the keys to success." – **Kristina Comstock, EP-C, Certified Exercise Physiologist**

then move on. You always have to be reaching for something, as well."

She says the biggest mistake people make when starting a new exercise routine is doing too much too fast. "They want immediate results. Develop a routine you can manage. The other thing is to *do what you enjoy*... this is a lifestyle. This is what you need to do for the

rest of your life so you must enjoy it or you will never stick with it."

Hamilton says it is important to remember that lapses are not failures. "You need to look at them as learning opportunities. Okay, so you did not do the best for breakfast but you can always do better at lunch time and dinner. Our goal is to help make the next day better."

CalvertHealth Partners with CoreLife to Combat Obesity



CalvertHealth has partnered with **CoreLife** to open clinics in Prince Frederick and Waldorf to help Southern Maryland residents struggling with obesity and related risk-factors to achieve better health through a comprehensive approach to weight management.

Data from the most recent Community Health Needs Assessments demonstrate that obesity is of critical concern in the tri-county region. The CoreLife integrated care model includes medical, nutrition and behavioral health support as well as exercise in one location.

"Our goal is to provide evidence-based, personalized care to patients looking for a better way to manage their weight and diseases that are related to their weight," said **Dr. Cressent Pressley**, medical director for CoreLife.

CalvertHealth President and CEO **Dean Teague** says the CoreLife model is what he believes

will be most beneficial to patients. "We know obesity is an issue in our community, which requires intervention and support. So, it was important for us to select a partner that would set patients up for the best chance of success now and in the future."

He went on to add, "Our organizations have a shared vision, which allows each person to achieve their health goals through coordinated, preventive health care and resources."

CalvertHealth launched a Metabolic and Bariatric Program in 2021. The partnership with CoreLife will benefit patients seeking both surgical and non-surgical weight loss options.

