

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

# MyHealthTALK

January 2014

Courtesy of Asset Health

HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Be Healthy, Be Happy!*



## More Blood Could Mean More **Lives**

The American Red Cross has received 50,000 fewer donations than anticipated as a result of an estimated 10 percent decrease in blood donations across the U.S. in June, according to Fox News. January is National Blood Donor Month, which makes it the perfect time to continue being a generous blood donor or start donating blood to help someone in need.

Research has found that five million U.S. patients need blood annually. Someone needs blood every two seconds, and less than 38 percent of the population is qualified to donate blood. If you meet the minimum requirements, you can donate blood every 56 days and platelets every seven days.

For a successful donation, the American Red Cross recommends avoiding foods high in fat before donating, maintaining a healthy level of iron in your diet and hydrating with an extra 16 ounces of fluids before and after donation.

Look online for more information about how, when and where you can donate blood. You can check the American Association of Blood Banks and American Red Cross websites for important facts about the blood donation process, tips, benefits and information for first-time donors.

If you've never donated blood before, start off gradually. It just takes one pint of blood to help save up to three lives. Be sure to add "donate blood" to the top of your New Year's resolution list this year, and help support your local communities and hospitals.

[aabb.org](http://aabb.org)

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org),

"Red Cross announces urgent need for donations," [www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com), July 29, 2013.

## Stay Safe Before Enjoying the SNOWFALL

For many of us, winter is a great time to celebrate holidays, have snowball fights, enjoy a cup of hot chocolate or ice skate – it's also a great time to suffer physical injuries from various winter-time activities and have accidents in your home or vehicle. Taking simple precautions can help keep you safe and prevent unnecessary pain and suffering.

Research suggests that home fires are more widespread in the winter months and that cooking is the major cause of winter residential building fires. The National Safety Council and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency offer tips on how to prepare your home, vehicle and family for the winter.

### Tips for Preparing for Winter:

- Clean your chimney and fireplace to prevent ash from building up
- Replace smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector batteries once annually
- Have a routine checkup performed on your heating system to ensure that it's efficient
- Keep rechargeable batteries handy in case of a power outage from a winter storm
- Check the tires of your vehicle for tread wear and proper inflation to reduce damage
- Try using non-toxic de-icing materials such as sand to prevent harmful waste from chemicals
- Carry an emergency kit in your vehicle at all times with items including a bag of salt, ice scraper, snow brush and hat and gloves

[nsc.org/safety](http://nsc.org/safety), [epa.gov](http://epa.gov)



# HOLDING

ON

to your

# NEW YEAR'S

# RESOLUTIONS

Didn't stick to the set of resolutions you had hoped to achieve for yourself last year? The New Year means a whole new list of resolutions and perhaps a bunch of promises you are finding difficult to keep. In fact, there are simple things you can start doing to help you stick to this year's resolutions.

The American Psychological Association (APA) suggests that there is an improved likelihood of keeping your resolutions during the year if you set smaller goals and make them realistic. Psychologist Lynn Bufka, PhD advises that "...it is not the extent of the change that matters, but rather the act of recognizing that lifestyle change is important and working toward it, one step at a time."

While you make your list of New Year's resolutions, consider adding "Know My Numbers" to the top of your list on the road to making healthier decisions. Knowing your health measurement numbers (biometrics) is crucial for your health management. This can be as simple as participating in an onsite biometric screening at your workplace to gain a better understanding of your health condition.

Biometric screenings measure blood pressure, total cholesterol, HDL, glucose and BMI (height and weight) numbers, which are important for setting your individual nutrition and exercise goals. Most employers that participate in a health and wellness program offer annual biometric screenings at no cost to you. If a biometric screening is not available, consider scheduling a preventive exam with your primary care physician.

Try setting a goal this year to invest in a healthier, more productive you. You might find that this resolution can be easy to stick to.

[apa.org/helpcenter](http://apa.org/helpcenter)

"5 Tricks to Make Your New Year's Resolutions Stick," Gary Belsky & Tom Gilovich, [www.business.time.com](http://www.business.time.com), Jan. 3, 2012.

"The secret to making New Year's resolutions stick," Dr. Henry Cloud, [www.foxnews.com/opinion](http://www.foxnews.com/opinion), Dec. 29, 2012.



## TIPS to Make Your RESOLUTIONS STICK

**EXPECT** to have slip-ups

**REFLECT** on old patterns of failure

*Write* down your goals or resolutions

**RESTRICT** the amount of promises you make

**Get INVOLVED** with people who are already achieving what you want to achieve