

SPA *living*®

January 2019

What do the New Year and rehabilitation therapy have in common?



For many of us, January 1 symbolizes a clean slate and a fresh start. This date, which ushers in the New Year, represents a new beginning for those of us who seek to change our habits and start anew.

In the New Year, we can choose any number of things to work on: losing weight, eating healthier, going to the gym, reading books, stopping smoking, volunteering... the possibilities are endless.

So what does the New Year have in common with rehabilitation therapy? Both involve setting goals.

In rehabilitation therapy, however, we wouldn't wait for a symbolic date to start working on regaining our strength, mobility or independence. Under the supervision of a licensed and credentialed physical, occupational, speech or

respiratory therapist, we'd start as soon as possible—whether it be the 2nd, 9th, 16th, or any other day of the month.

The goals set by our rehabilitation therapists are SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound. A goal for physical therapy, for example, might include the ability to pull yourself to a standing position with minimal assistance 3 times by February 1, or it could involve climbing 12 stairs independently by February 15 in order to safely return home after a surgery. A goal for occupational therapy may be to button your shirt by using a buttonhook by March 21, and for speech therapy a goal could involve completing basic word retrieval tasks by May 19 with 80% accuracy given maximal visual, verbal, tactile cues.

How much more progress would we make towards our lifestyle goals if we could start to think about our New Year's resolutions in the same SMART way as our rehabilitation goals? Instead of joining a gym, what about setting a goal to go to the gym three times per week for four weeks, spending 15 minutes on cardio exercises and 15 minutes on stretching each visit? Or instead of eating healthier, how about making sure that each meal for the next three weeks is consistent with the food pyramid, incorporating the recommended amounts of fruit, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy—and limiting fats, oils and sweets?

One advantage of setting SMART goals is that they're realistic for you, and they also include a date by which you should be able to meet these goals. This gives you a chance to assess what you've done well and evaluate whether what you're doing is working. It then enables you to adjust your plan of action according to your progress or setbacks. It's not realistic to think that you'll be able to go to the gym seven days per week for an hour each day after living a sedentary lifestyle. But maybe after doing 15 minutes of cardio and 15 minutes of stretching at the gym for a month, you'll be ready to add an additional day of exercise, and/or you will be able to increase your cardio and stretching to 20 minutes each per session.

As you plan your resolutions for 2019, try setting SMART goals this year. Genesis Rehab Services wishes you success in meeting your goals, whatever they may be.

January Word Search: Setting rehab goals

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| ABILITY | GYM | SLATE |
| BEGINNING | HABITS | START |
| CHANGE | HEALTHIER | SYMBOLIZE |
| CLEAN | NEW | TACTILE |
| COMMON | POSSIBILITIES | TASKS |
| CUES | READING | VERBAL |
| DATE | RETURN | VISUAL |
| FRESH | SAFELY | VOLUNTEER |
| GOALS | SETTING | YEAR |



December Word Search Key



Health spotlight

Don't let glaucoma rob you blind

Glaucoma can easily go undetected. According to the Glaucoma Awareness Foundation, about 2.7 million Americans have glaucoma, yet nearly half of those affected don't even know it. With that in mind, make sure you get a comprehensive eye exam to test for the disease, as early detection is key. While there is no cure, glaucoma vision loss can be slowed through medication or surgery. Visit www.glaucoma.org to learn more. If you are already diagnosed with glaucoma or have experienced vision loss, stop by your rehab gym to find out if rehabilitation therapy may help you counteract the effects.

