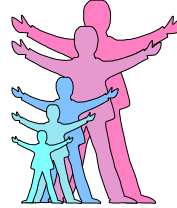


# Helpline



**January 2009**  
**Happy New Year**

## The Month After Christmas

'Twas the month after Christmas, and all  
 through the house  
 Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.  
 The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog  
 I would taste  
 at the holiday parties had gone to my waist.  
 When I got on the scales there arose  
 such a number!  
 When I walked to the store it was less a walk  
 than a lumber.  
 I remembered the marvelous meals I'd prepared;  
 The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare,  
 The wine and the rum balls, the bread  
 and the cheese  
 And the way I'd never said, "None  
 for me, please."  
 As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt  
 And prepared once again to do battle with dirt—  
 I said to myself, as only I can  
 "You can't spend another winter disguised  
 as a man!"  
 So—away with the last of the sour cream dip,  
 Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip  
 Every last bit of food that I like  
 must be banished  
 Till all the additional ounces have vanished.  
 I won't have a cookie - not even a lick.  
 I'll chew only on long celery sticks.  
 I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,  
 I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.  
 I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore  
 But isn't that what January is for?  
 Unable to giggle, life's no longer a riot.  
 Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!  
 - -Author Unknown



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## Top 24 Healthy Resolutions for 2009

Try to use 2 every month to make a difference in your health.

1. **Exercise** 30 minutes or more, most days of the week. Find ways to stay motivated with physical activity and keep it enjoyable.



2. Be more **active** around the house. Cleaning, cooking and gardening all burn twice the calories as sitting.

3. **Sit less.** Instead of watching TV, clean the house and run errands. Instead of watching the kids play sports, walk for half of their playing time. Instead of sitting for lunch, walk the mall or a park.

4. **Cook** more and eat out less.

5. **Find eating out choices** that are lower in calories and fat. Where can you get more lowfat items like: soups, salads, beans and rice, fish, pasta, etc?

6. Learn to cook and eat with **less fat.**

7. Get 4.5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day.

8. Eat **beans** at least 3 times per week.



9. Eat **fish** twice per week.

10. Switch to low-fat or **non-fat dairy products.**

11. Reduce the amount of **cheese** that you eat. Cheese is the number one source of saturated fat in most American's diets.

12. Become aware of the **calories** you are eating – especially in treats and snacks.

13. For **everything** you eat, find a way to make the portion a little smaller or to choose a more low-cal option.

14. Include **strength training** in your schedule a couple of times a week. This could mean lifting weights at the gym, taking a class working with resistance bands or Pilates.



15. Switch from refined **grains** to whole grains.

16. Eat a healthy **breakfast** every day.

17. Reduce the amount of **sugary items** that you eat. You will crave sweets less if you eat them less.

18. Drink more **water** instead of soda and other sugary drinks.

19. Take **healthful snacks** with you instead of making poor spontaneous choices when you are hungry. Fruit is always the best snack choice.

20. Get more **sleep.**



21. Wash your **hands** more frequently.

22. Control the consumption of **alcoholic** beverages you consume. Learn to drink one or two and then switch to something else that is non-alcoholic.

23. Concentrate on eating more **high-fiber**, low-cal foods instead of refined foods that are high in calories and low in nutrients.

24. Plan active **vacations** and weekends for you and your family or loved ones.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, Nov. 2005

## Worst diet promotions of 2008 snag 20th Annual Slim Chance Awards

Healthy Weight Network recently released its 20th annual Slim Chance Awards, highlighting both the hidden dangers of diets and supplements that often contain unknown ingredients and sometimes potent drugs, and the merely ridiculous.



To call 2008 a typical year in the weight loss field would be too easy. This year's awards go to an infamous huckster of diet infomercials, known for his outrageous disregard of injunctions against him; \$139 body-shaping jeans impregnated with substances that supposedly reduce cellulite; a pill that's "proven" to make your belly fat vanish; and a dangerous starvation diet launched recklessly on the Internet with false promises of safe, fast and permanent weight loss.

All in all, a typical year that synthesizes all that is deceptive and exploitive in this field. So, here they are, the 20th annual Slim Chance Awards:

**MOST OUTRAGEOUS CLAIM: Kevin Trudeau infomercials.** It's rare that regulatory agencies look at books, given our free speech laws, but the infomercials for Kevin Trudeau's weight loss book and his repeated violations were just too much for the Federal Trade Commission, and this past August he was fined over \$5 million and banned from infomercials for three years. In "willful efforts" to deceive, Trudeau told listeners they could easily follow the diet protocol at home, even though his book calls for human growth hormone injections and colonics that must be done by a licensed practitioner.

### WORST GIMMICK: Skineez jeans (\$139).

A new item in the fight against cellulite, Skineez jeans are impregnated with a so-called "medication" of retinol and chitosan, a shellfish product once claimed to cut fat absorption in the stomach. Friction between

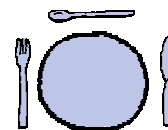


the jeans and skin supposedly triggers release of the substance, which goes to work on fat when absorbed through the skin. Reportedly a big hit in Europe, the "smart fabric" is also used in lingerie. FTC, however, is clear about such gimmicks, emphasizing that products worn or rubbed on the skin do not cause weight loss or fat loss.

**WORST CLAIM: AbGONE.** Throughout 2008 full page ads assaulted the eye in daily newspapers across the country touting AbGONE as "proven to promote pot belly loss." Claims are that AbGONE increases "fat metabolism" and calorie burn, promotes appetite suppression and inhibits future abdominal fat deposits. These are drug claims that, if true, would alter the body's regulation, but unlike drugs, the pills are sold as food supplements not requiring FDA approval. No added diet and exercise needed – well, except, you may want to heed the fine print disclaimer at the bottom that reminds us "diet and exercise are essential."

### WORST PRODUCT: Kimkins diet.

It must have seemed an easy way to get rich quick. Founder Heidi "Kimmer" Diaz set up a website and charged members a fee to access the Kimkins diet, boasting they could lose up to 5 percent of their body weight in 10 days. "Better than gastric bypass," there was "no faster diet," and in fact she herself had lost 198 lbs. in 11 months. In June 2007 *Women's World* ran it as a cover story, and that month alone PayPal records show the Kimkins site took in over \$1.2 million. Then users began complaining of chest pains, hair loss, heart palpitations, irritability and menstrual irregularities. This was not surprising since Kimkins is essentially a starvation diet, down to 500 calories per day and deficient in many nutrients (shockingly, laxatives are advised to replace the missing fiber).



"Today's economic downturn can remind us how foolish it is to waste money on unsafe, ineffective and energy-draining weight loss efforts," said Francie M. Berg, a licensed nutritionist and adjunct professor at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine, whose organization Healthy Weight Network started the Slim Chance Awards 20 years ago.

## Green Living - Shopping Tips

### Save Money and the Environment

A family of four can save \$3,000 a year simply by buying products in the largest size they can use and by buying long lasting reusable items. Think about the effect of your purchases on the environment when you shop. Items with excess packaging and products that need to be discarded after only a few uses cost more money, use up valuable resources and create more waste.



### Buy Products in the Largest Size You Can Use; Avoid Excess packaging

A family of four can save \$2,000 a year in the supermarket by choosing large sizes instead of individual serving sizes. Remember, ten cents of every shopping dollar is used to pay for packaging. Small sizes use more packaging for each ounce of product than large sizes. So, if you buy large sizes, you save money, reduce waste, and help the environment. That is a really good buy. Here are a few good examples, look for others the next time you shop.

- Buy cereal in a large box instead of in individual serving sizes.
- Buy juice in concentrates and use reusable containers instead of single serving packages.
- Save money by buying bottled water in a large plastic jug instead of six packs of 16 ounce bottles. Reuse plastic water bottles.
- Buy large packages of sugar and flour.
- Avoid the small boxes of raisins and buy the same amount in the 24 ounce box.

### Buy Products in Containers That You Know You Will Be Able to Recycle



It is important to familiarize yourself with your what types of containers and items can be recycled in your local recycling program. Once you know what you can recycle, look for products that come in the containers that you know you will be able to recycle when the products are all used up. Examples are products in commonly recycled containers made from aluminum, steel, #1 and #2 plastic, and glass. Check

the Earth 911 Reuse and Recycling Services listings to see what types of containers/packaging you should look for in your community.

### Buy Reusable and Long Lasting Items



Products that can be reused are cheaper in the long run than those you throw away and buy over and over again. Goods that are designed to last a long time are also cheaper in the long run than those that wear out quickly. A family can save \$1,000 each year buy buying reusable and long lasting products.

- Use rechargeable batteries in toys, flashlights, radios. You can save \$200 a year by using rechargeable batteries instead of disposables in one cd payer used two hours a day.
- Use cloth diapers instead of disposable diapers. You'll save \$600 per child by using a laundry diaper service instead of disposable diapers.
- Use a real camera instead of disposable ones. If you take 24 pictures each month you will save \$144 each year.
- Many families spend over \$260 each year on paper towels and napkins. Switch to cloth napkins, sponges, and cloth towels or wipes.
- Use washable plates, cups, and silverware for parties and picnics instead of disposable products.
- Use an electric razor or hand razor with replaceable blades instead of disposable razors.
- Buy high quality/long life tires. They cost less per mile traveled and reduce the problem of disposing of used tires.
- Use a washable commuter mug for your morning coffee and eliminate a Styrofoam or plastic cup every day.
- Bring bags to the market, either cloth ones or your old paper and plastic ones. Many markets will credit your bill for using your own bags. When buying only a few items, don't take a bag.
- Clean and service your appliances, computers, tools, and cars so that they will enjoy even longer lives. And, before you replace them, check to see if they are repairable. Consider sharing equipment that is used infrequently such as hedge clippers, pruners, fruit pickers, or chain saws.

Source: Earth 911 Making Every Day Earth Day!

## IRS Tax Tips for Donations



Individuals and businesses making contributions to charity should keep in mind several important tax law provisions that have taken effect in recent years.

### Rules for Clothing and Household Items

To be deductible, clothing and household items donated to charity must be in good used condition or better. A clothing or household item for which a taxpayer claims a deduction of over \$500 does not have to be in good used condition or better if the taxpayer included a qualified appraisal of the item with the return. Household items include furniture, furnishings, electronics, appliances, and linens.

- For all donations of property, including clothing and household items, get from the charity, if possible, a receipt that included the name of the charity, date of the contribution, and a reasonably—detailed description of the donated property. If a donation is left at a charity’s unattended drop site, keep a written record of the donation that includes this information, as well as the fair market value of the property of the donation and the method used to determine that value. Additional rules apply for a contribution of \$250 or more.

### Guidelines for Monetary Donations

To deduct any charitable donation of money, regardless of amount, a taxpayer must have a bank record or a written communication from the charity showing the name of the charity and the date and amount of the contribution. Bank records include cancelled checks, bank or credit union statements, and credit card statements. Bank



or credit union statements should show the name of the charity, the date, and the amount paid. Credit card statements should show the name of the charity, the date, and the transaction posting date.

- Donation of money include those made in cash or by check, electronic funds transfer, credit card, and payroll deduction for payroll deductions, the taxpayer should retain a pay stub, a Form W-2 wage statement or other document furnished by the employer showing the total amount withheld for charity, along with the pledge card showing the name of the charity.
- A taxpayer must obtain an acknowledgement from a charity of each deductible donation (either money or property) of \$250 or more.

Only taxpayers who itemize their deductions on Form 1040 schedule A can claim deductions for charitable contributions. This deduction is not available to people who choose the standard deduction, including anyone who files a short form (Form 1040A or 1040EZ).