Announcer 0:03

The Missouri State Journal, aweekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Sofia Perez 0:09

I'm Sofia Perez. Today on the Missouri State Journal. I have Evonne Bird. She is a certified exercise physiologist and national board-certified health and wellness coach in the McQueary College of Health and Human Services at Missouri State University. She's here to talk about tips to achieving your health and wellness goals in the new year.

Evonne Bird 0:28

So my advice for someone wanting to start an exercise program or to be healthier in the new year would be to have a plan. So most people don't think about when they want to change behavior, that there's really four or five other behaviors that will have to be changed in addition to that one behavior. For example, if you say, I want to start exercising more, okay, well, does that mean you have to get up in the morning, so your sleep schedule is changed? Do you need to have the right clothes? Do you have access to a workout facility? If it's cold out, do you need to have a place to work out? Do you have access to all of those things? Do you have the right shoes for the activity you're going to do. So most people when they're wanting to change behavior, don't really think about all the extra things. So my biggest advice would be to make sure you have a plan in place and try to think about all those things that might be affected. In addition to this one goal that you're wanting to set.

Sofia Perez 1:19

Byrd also says that those new to exercise or wanting to start a new routine in the new year should seek help from a support system.

Evonne Bird 1:26

Maybe it is you find a buddy or somebody else that you want to exercise with or this you know very supportive, that would actually, you know, help you get up get out of the door or you know that you're going to meet them to work out. Now there's a lot of different ways that you can have that support system in place to help you achieve your goals.

Sofia Perez 1:43

Byrd recommend starting small with an activity such as walking.

Evonne Bird 1:47

Make sure you have some good shoes go out, start with a small amount of time and work your way up. One of the biggest challenges for a beginning exerciser is not overdoing it in the beginning and then getting sore or injured. What I would recommend for somebody that wants to go by steps and see how many steps they're doing or wants to set a step goal would be to figure out their baseline. So initially measure how many steps they're taking and see where they are to start with. And then they can set a goal to do more like maybe 500 steps a day more, and each week, increase that a little bit depending on how it's going for him and how it's working.

Sofia Perez

While 10,000 steps is a common daily step goal, Bird says this number is not based on research, and that number of daily steps depends on the person and their exercise experience.

Evonne Bird 2:34

If you are at 4,000 steps, and you say I'm going to get 10, it's going to be hard to get that extra 6,000 steps a day, especially if you don't have a plan in place.

Sofia Perez 2:42

For those looking to take their exercise and wellness to the next level, Bird gives insight on finding a personal trainer.

Evonne Bird 2:48

I would recommend getting somebody that's been certified through like the American College of Sports Medicine, the National Strength and Conditioning Association or the American Council on Exercise, those are all three really powerful big organizations that have a quality certification for a personal trainer. I would recommend first the for the personal trainer, I would say you can get on like the American College of Sports Medicine website, and they have a list of personal trainers that are certified through them. So they have a couple of different levels of certification. But that would be a good place to go do a little research and background on the people that you'd be working with. For the wellness coach. There is the National Board for health and wellness coaching. And they have a website and they have a list of wellness coaches that are board certified wellness coaches. Because I want to clarify here that there are some places that say they have a health coach, but the health coach is really just a general person that helps you welcome you to the fitness facility. So they don't have any certifications. So you really need to make sure you're checking on the background for the the wellness coach, are they board certified? Are they actually or did they go through an accredited program. So you want to be looking for those qualities. And remember that the wellness coach is there to coach you and help you make the your own decisions. Whereas the personal trainer will be saying, here's what you should do.

Sofia Perez 4:12

Bird recommends implementing micro changes to those who are starting a new wellness journey in the new year.

Evonne Bird 4:18

The last thing I would like to give maybe for a little piece of advice is to not get discouraged. And one way to think about your behavior change is to do micro changes and say you know what, today I'm going to make this mini change and it might just be one thing is, you know, normally I eat this three o'clock snack. Well, you know what, I'm going to pack an apple for this three o'clock snack. So I'm going to do that or when I'm hungry instead of going to eat or in my afternoon snack when I'm thinking I'm hungry. I'm going to go for a little walk and I'm going to get some steps instead. So think about micro changes that you can make small changes and eventually they become a habit. So good habits are just as hard to break as bad habits. So if you set those good things then you'll be doing well in it.

Sofia Perez 5:00

That was Evonne Bird. I'm Sofia Perez for the Missouri State Journal.

Announcer 5:05

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