



Live your Inspired Life

Low FODMAP Diet Coaching

Creating New Habits

How long does it take to create a habit?

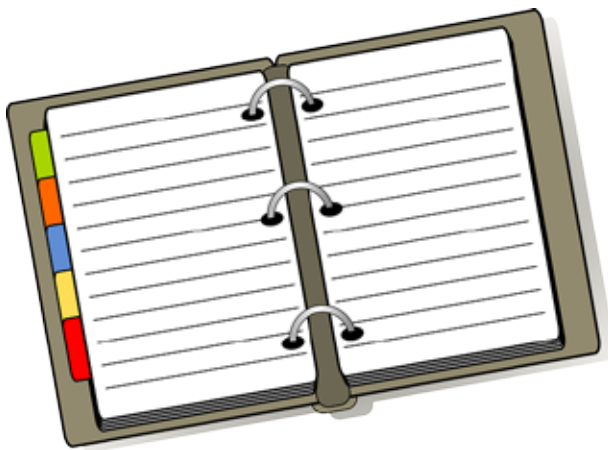
It's important to not make too many changes at once or you will be overwhelmed. Gradually build activities into your schedule so the process is smooth and you hardly notice it. If the new activity is a simple one like drinking a glass of water as soon as you wake up, it takes around 20 days. However, if it is harder, like running for 15 minutes before dinner, it could take 2-3 months. Other activities could take even longer. It is all about willpower to stay the distance until the habit is formed.

What habits should I form?

The most important habits for you to form are those connected with your diet. Eat 3 main meals and have two snacks so that no one meal is a heavy one. Eating your meals at the same time each day will form a habit so you don't skip a meal and then gorge on food and intake an overload of FODMAPs. Regular exercise is something you should schedule and do until you feel something is wrong if you don't do it. Make sure you schedule time with your family each day. At a minimum, all have dinner together in the evening. Carve out time for yourself every day when no one can disturb you. Close your study door or bedroom door and ban anyone from entering.

How do I persevere until it becomes a habit?

You will succeed if you schedule your various activities and have them firmly put in your calendar. If you only keep them in your head, you will find that the day has ended and you have forgotten or run out of time to do some of the basics that are essential if you are ever to form a habit. Also keep track of the new activities in a notebook or even on a whiteboard and mark when you do it and when you don't. That will make you much more accountable.



Get your family on board with the new habits you are trying to form and even include them in some like the exercising perhaps. Then you are accountable to each other. During this habit forming period, don't focus on results – focus just on the activity itself. Results can be slow to come especially with exercise and we don't want you to give up

because there doesn't seem to be any improvement. Make sure as much as possible that you enjoy the activities you are cultivating. Tying the new habit into something that already exists in your daily routine has been scientifically proved to increase the chances of you maintaining the habit. eg. I will exercise as soon as I get home from work.



What happens if I slip up on the habit?

You must never miss two straight days or you are in trouble. If you miss one day, declare a state of emergency to make sure you do the activity the next day. It must register as something monumental that you forgot. When you miss a day, you are at your most fragile and the most likely to say, “To hell with it.” That is when the tough guns have to come out. Examine why you missed it and try to eliminate the why.



How do I stay on track when on holiday?

Holidays constitute a change, and change can play havoc with habits and routine. It will take a lot of planning to make sure at least your routine with food is not disturbed even if your other daily lifestyle habits might have to be put aside for the moment. You can phone ahead with your diet requirements for any plane journey.

It is probably a better idea to stay in a serviced apartment or a motel where you have a kitchen and can continue your diet uninterrupted. Prepare lunches and snacks for yourself as usual so when you are on the go for a day trip, you have something to eat. The rest of the family can eat food from a café or supermarket if they prefer but you will have your own food supply. You will eat out sometimes of course and then you use the techniques we will discuss later for eating in a restaurant. A holiday need not ruin everything and take you back to square one but you will have to be vigilant.

