

THE PATIENT PRESCRIPTION

HOPEHEALTH

Your Health Begins Here

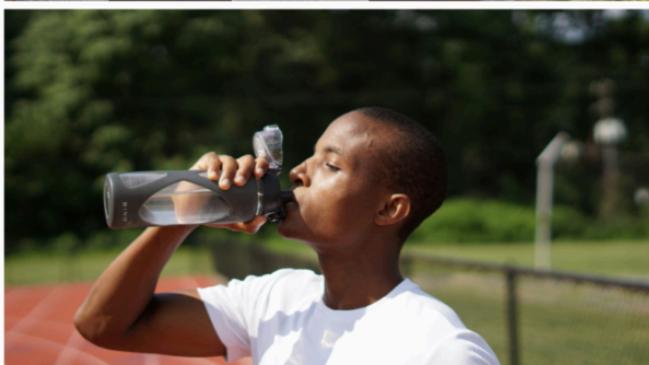
H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

Quality Spotlight - Lifestyle Health

HopeHealth's quality focus for January is lifestyle health. This clinical focus includes measures like well visits and annual physicals, diet and exercise counseling, colon cancer screenings, and dental health.

Keep reading to learn how to make health your goal for 2026.

Make Health Your New Year's Resolution



HopeHealth

After two months of holiday celebrations and an overabundance of food, many people feel the need to set New Year's resolutions for their health, including losing weight or getting more active. Sadly, these goals are often abandoned before the end of January. Why is it so hard to stick to a New Year's goal? There can be many reasons, but the bottom line is that change is difficult.

Most people have good intentions when setting a goal, but they usually don't truly consider the commitment, effort, or accountability involved and may not feel a genuine desire to make a change.

The required changes may also be unrealistic or unsustainable. Often, there is no backup plan when a goal isn't working, and it becomes easier to give up and go back to the usual routine. Once the goal is abandoned, a sense of failure for not succeeding can also lead to feelings of depression and low motivation, resulting in an apathetic outlook.

To be successful, instead of making drastic changes, set health goals that are simple, reasonable, and attainable for the life you have now. It's vital to examine what might actually work with a common-sense approach, and include regular monitoring to evaluate and refine your goal. Setting smaller, more sustainable health goals means the change becomes part of your life and is done automatically and consistently. Start small and build more over time. Enjoying the process also helps tremendously!

For ideas and input, we've polled HopeHealth staff to add their advice and tips. We asked, "What's one simple thing a person can focus on in the new year for better overall health?"

Setting goals requires time to develop an effective plan. Decide what's important and realistic. Sharon Black, Director of Integrative Health Services, recommends to "set realistic goals and create a consistent routine." Choose one or two simple goals for healthy eating and being more active.

Physician Assistant Alan Barrett shares simple, effective strategies: "Instead of overhauling your entire routine, focus on making one small, sustainable swap in your daily routine at a time. Easy changes include committing to drinking a glass of water first thing in the morning before coffee, or adding one extra serving of vegetables to your dinner. Small changes are much easier to maintain than a drastic resolution, and those small, positive actions build the foundation for significant, long-term improvements in your overall health."

Caitlin Guess, Registered Dietitian, suggests, "Focus on changes that help you build structure, not restriction. Spacing meals and snacks out every few hours and including both energy foods (like grains or fruit) and protein foods (like nuts or cheese) not only improves health, but it can also make a huge difference in how you feel day to day."

Set a goal of getting more steps in and start where you can. Taking a 10–15-minute walk during the day, parking farther away, or using the stairs instead of the elevator are all simple ways to add more steps to your day. While 10,000 is the accepted standard, even hitting 2,000 or 5,000 will make a difference for your health, depending on your fitness level.

Once you set a goal, explore how it can work best for you. Take time to determine how a goal can fit into your life. Write it down or talk to a friend about it. If you need accountability, enlist someone who can provide positive support and check in with you regularly. Think of your goal as an experiment, try it out, and be flexible. For example, if the goal is to drink a glass of water in the morning before coffee, an option would be to place a water bottle by your bed. Try it and see how it works, then tweak if needed. For example, if you keep forgetting to drink it, placing a note by the coffee pot may help it work more effectively. Goals often need a few tweaks to integrate effectively into your daily or weekly routine and become a habit.

Monitor progress and adjust as needed. Check in regularly to assess your progress. Be sure to review any benefits, such as feeling better, having more energy, or increased endurance. Continue editing goals, and if you're struggling, consider developing new strategies or setting a new goal. Check in with honest analysis and flexibility, and keep moving forward.

Setbacks are normal. Changes in schedule, illness, holidays, and other life events can disrupt a habit. Instead of giving in to guilt or shame, use the tools of analysis and figure out how to get back on track, even if it's in a new way. Sonda Jett-Clair, Disease Prevention Coordinator, recommends, "We all experience setbacks. Any time you get thrown off course, pick yourself up, brush it off, and start again."

Celebrate all wins, no matter how small. Instead of looking at what you haven't done, focus more on what has been accomplished. If you do half the goal during a tough week, it's still a win. Building on the positive inspires more confidence and inspiration to continue with the goal.

Fill your cup. Seek out activities that promote overall mental health and nourish the soul. Replenish your positivity and well-being with enjoyable activities. Dr. Joseph Hoyle encourages engaging

activities for all ages. "Visit the Florence County Museum at least once this year. Look for family or reading activities once a month for small children, painting classes for older children, and volunteer opportunities for adults."

Choose kindness. In various forms, kindness can boost morale, reduce stress, improve mental health, and ultimately create a ripple effect of positivity. Focusing on being contagious with kindness not only improves our well-being, but it can also contribute to a more compassionate and harmonious world!

Goals are about progress, not perfection. Small steps to promote overall health add up to big changes over time. Create a plan to establish effective and sustainable health goals that will last throughout 2026!

Upcoming Seniors With Hope Events



All events are from 2-3:30 PM

Seniors with Hope at Bethea

157 Home Avenue, Darlington
February 5, March 5

Seniors with Hope at Streater

301 N. Dargan Street, Florence
February 12, March 12

Seniors with Hope in Kingstree

520 Thurgood Marshall Highway, Kingstree
February 19, March 19

Seniors with Hope is held monthly and includes speakers, games, snacks, door prizes, and more.

For more information about participating in the program, email

Diane Davis or call (803) 525-4241.

2025 Golf Classic Winners



Congratulations to the winners of our 2025 Golf Classic!

The Championship flight team was Dr. Nadia Carey and Family (pictured). First flight was awarded to MUSC. Second flight was awarded to Southern Senior Care.

[Click here](#) to read more about the ninth annual tournament.

Coffee With Community Health Workers



Join us for conversation, connection, and care at the Streater Community Center, located beside the HopeHealth Medical Plaza.

Monday-Friday | 9-11 AM
Streater Community Center | 301 North Dargan Street, Florence

Come grab a cup of coffee and chat with your local Community Health Workers. In a relaxed setting, you can learn about health resources, ask questions, and connect with support. Free Coffee, friendly faces, and health info!

Visit hope-health.org/community/events for a list of free programs offered at the Streeter Community Center and other locations.

Recipe Spotlight

Baked Sweet Potato Fries

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes (2-3 medium or 2 large potatoes)
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Optional: black pepper, cayenne pepper, garlic powder

Directions:

- Preheat your oven to 425°F. Use two oven racks and ensure the top rack is positioned at least 6 inches away from the heat source. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper to prevent the potatoes from sticking to the pan.
- Peel the sweet potatoes and slice them into thin fries, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Divide in half and spread evenly over the two baking sheets.
- Sprinkle $1 \frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of cornstarch and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt over each batch and toss the fries until they are lightly coated.
- Drizzle 1 Tbs. olive oil over each batch, and toss lightly until all fries are coated and no powdered spots remain. Use your hands to rub any excess powder into the fries.
- Arrange the fries in a single layer, without overcrowding, so they crisp up evenly.
- Bake for 20 minutes, take out, and flip the fries over with a spatula to cook the other side. Switch the positions so the potatoes on the top rack are now on the lower rack and vice versa.
- Bake for 12-18 minutes, until fries are crispy and change from a shiny orange to a more matte, puffy texture. Keep an eye on them as they can go from crispy to burnt quickly.
- Toss with optional seasonings as desired.
- Serve warm.

Serves 4.

Visit hope-health.org/community/events to learn about and sign up for free community classes offered by HopeHealth! Topics range from healthy cooking to diabetes management, prioritizing movement, carbohydrate counting, and more.



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5 - Very Satisfied

4 - Satisfied

3 - Neutral

2 - Dissatisfied

1 - Very Dissatisfied

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