Creating a new habit can be challenging. However, there are methods to improve the chances of developing a healthy habit. Taking small steps is often easier and more likely to result in lasting change. Your brain is literally changing every day, and once you develop your new habit, it will feel very easy to continue that behavior. The key is setting yourself up for success.

**Steps on building a habit:**

When you can, spend more time with people who have the healthy habit you are trying to learn. The people we live with, work with and socialize with greatly influence our decisions.

Build your awareness — understand your thoughts and how your body feels when you take a step toward your habit as well as a step away. By knowing how you think and feel inside, you’re more likely to stay on course.

Design your environment to support developing your habit. Do things around you make it hard to build your healthy habit? Get rid of them! To adopt your healthy habit, you need to get rid of the obstacles.

Break down the habit you wish to achieve into small steps. If you want to walk 1 mile (four laps around a track), start with one lap and increase the distance each week until reach one mile. Set realistic goals for success!

Enjoy the ride. Habits are formed by repetition, and you are more likely to repeat something if you enjoy doing it. Attach something you like with the habit you want to build. If you dislike exercising but enjoy listening to music, put the two together!

“A habit is a lifestyle to be lived, not a finish line to be crossed.”

- James Clear, author

Ask the Expert

Every Thursday, noon–12:30 p.m.

Join a 30 minute Ask the Expert session with Meghan Ames, community program manager at the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion, to explore how to hold on to healthy habits and let go of the ones that aren't serving you.

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