

Do Not let the Cold Weather Get You Down! Challenge the Winter Blues with these Mood Enhancing Tips!

*Bethesda Medical Associates
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Once the holidays are over and the schedule gets back to normal, most people feel a little down moving into the winter months. Whether it is the lack of warm sunshine or the cold dreary weather, the “winter blues” effect people differently. The best way to keep your mood up is to find what you love about the season and use it to improve both your health and fitness. Read below to get some new ideas for embracing the cold weather season and improving your health as well.

Get More Shut Eye: There is a reason why animal hibernate in the winter. Colder temperatures can improve both sleep quality and help you sleep deeper. The shorter days also promote deep sleep since sleep is easier to achieve when bedrooms are dark which means void of both digital light and sunlight. Start the new year with a goal of going to bed thirty minutes earlier. Increased sleep will help support immune function as well as improved blood pressure, energy, focus and appetite control.

Burn More Calories: The cold weather makes it a little easier to work off those holiday pounds. Shivering is a result of tiny muscle contractions that will produce heat in order to increase your body temperature. This increase in metabolic rate will assist with increasing the number of calories you burn whether you are walking outside or exercising outdoors. Cold weather also improves the air quality which can assist with respiration during cardio training. Incorporate some outdoor fitness either in the early morning or on the weekends to enjoy the benefits and increased calorie burn of the winter weather.

Try some new warm beverages: Nothing says comfort like a cup of warm tea after being outdoors in the cold. Herbal teas can provide more than just comfort, they can also assist with increasing your immune function and soothing a sore throat. Certain varieties of tea can also be a nice substitute for evening snacks. Try Teavana’s seasonal peppermint white chocolate tea for a sweet indulgence or a warm cup of Celestial Seasoning’s Sugar Plum Spice tea for all of the flavor and none of the sugar.

Cold Weather & Better Health: Cold weather is great for both global and individual health. Cooler temperatures help kill off disease carrying insects and microorganisms which helps reduce infection rates. Winter temperatures have also been shown to assist with reducing inflammation. Though research is split on the actual impact, whole-body cryotherapy (where individuals get inside a chamber that is -166 degrees for a two to three minutes) has become increasingly popular in America and is touted by many for the improvements in athletic performance and reduction in joint pain. No matter what your reason, embracing the cold weather months will help keep you smiling while we patiently await Spring.



Embrace Winter with New Ideas for Homemade Tea

Lemon Tea for Immune Support

Adapted from <https://www.thankyourbody.com/recipe-flu-fighting-tea/>

Ingredients:

- 1 bag good quality organic echinacea tea (optional) ([like this](#))
- 3 or 4 thin slices of fresh organic ginger root
- 3 tablespoons organic lemon juice, fresh squeezed
- 2 tablespoons raw organic honey
- 1/2 teaspoon organic ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon organic ground clove
- Cayenne pepper to taste



Instructions:

1. In a large cup of hot filtered water, steep the tea bag and the sliced ginger (you may omit the tea bag if you'd like).
2. Add the lemon juice, honey and spices and stir well. The tea will be cloudy.
3. If you'd like, you may strain the tea through cheesecloth to remove the ground spices and ginger. At our house, we just drink it as is

Turmeric Tea for Winter Blues

Adapted from <http://helloglow.co/health-turmeric-tea/>

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of almond milk
- 1/2 to 1tsp. of turmeric
- 1tsp. of cinnamon
- 1/4tsp. ground ginger
- 1tsp honey



Instructions:

1. Heat the almond milk in a small sauce pan. When the milk is warm (not hot) stir in the spices. Pour into a large cup and add honey to taste.

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