

BMA NUTRITION NEWSLETTER

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The Surgeon General Gives New Urgency to Embrace Dry January

Back in 2023 I decided to give dry January, the new trend of eliminating alcohol for the first month of the year, a try and it lead me to completely reassess my relationship with alcohol. While many approach this challenge with the hope of losing weight, the benefits of breaking up with alcohol extend far beyond losing a few pounds. Personally I found that the biggest benefit was the improvement in my sleep quality and quantity but I also had more energy and found it easier to maintain a positive attitude throughout my day.

I have since encouraged multiple patients to complete this challenge and they have echoed the same benefits, more energy, better sleep, less achy joints, clearer head and also a few pounds lost on the scale. Most people know that drinking alcohol routinely is detrimental to health, but just this week the Surgeon General announced a new warning that routine alcohol consumption can significantly increase your risk of cancer. The SG's report went on the link alcohol intake to being the third leading cause of cancer and directly linking it to breast, colorectal, liver, esophageal, mouth throat and voice box cancer. This increased risk was found regardless of the type of alcohol consumed.

If you have yet to try the Dry January challenge it may be time to give it some thought. If you are reading this on January 30th you can always make "Dry February" your own personal challenge, and see if a life without alcohol (or with significantly less alcohol) is right for you!



Think Winter, Think PRODUCE!

Here is a list of what fruits & veggies are in season!

Apples	Greens
Avocado	Kiwi
Broccoli	Leeks
Brussel Sprouts	Mushrooms
Bok Choy	Parsnips
Cabbage	Pears
Carrots	Pomegranate
Cauliflower	Potatoes
Citrus Fruits	Winter Squash



How to Beat the Winter Blues

Being a Floridian in Maryland in challenging in Winter. It has taken me almost 15 years to get used to the short, cold, and dark days of January. I used to dread this time of year but since it comes around every December I started implementing a few goals to help me cope more effectively with the cold and actually make it a time I, dare I say, enjoy!

Here are my **FOUR TIPS** that help me thrive during the first three months of the year.

- **GET OUTSIDE EVERY DAY:** Yes it is cold and sometimes icy but fresh air and sunlight is imperative to beating the winter blues. Take a walk, play with your kids (or grandkids) or bundle up in a blanket and sit outside with your hot coffee or tea. Getting outside has been proven to be an effective strategy for mitigating seasonal effective disorder, so bundle up and embrace the outdoors!
- **PAMPER YOURSELF:** There is not much going on during these cold winter months so use the time to invest in yourself care. January 8th is National Bubble Bath Day so get some good bath salts and take a nice warm bath. Use the sauna more often. Schedule a message. Take this time to allow your body and mid to reset after the holidays.
- **EAT HEALTHY & COLORFUL MEALS:** Tis the season for colds and flu so strengthen your immune system by eating colorful seasonal produce. Think fresh citrus fruits, colorful tubers and root vegetables, deep green veggies like kale and broccoli. These pigments often act as antioxidants and can support your immune system making it stronger to keep you healthy!
- **FIND YOUR FUN:** Personally my favorite thing about winter is how well I sleep. It is cold and dark and amazing for getting a solid 7-8 hours. It is important to find the things you enjoy about winter versus complaining about what you do not like. Shifting your mindset will allow you to get through these months faster and with a better outlook!