

BEATING THE WINTER BLUES



SYMPTOMS OF THE WINTER BLUES

Symptoms are similar to depression but are milder and can include:

- LOW OR SAD MOOD
- IRRITABILITY
- DECREASED ENERGY
- FATIGUE
- CHANGE IN APPETITE
- LACK OF MOTIVATION



STOCK UP ON NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Foods that cause a spike and then drop in your blood sugar levels can alter your mood and increase irritation.

Snack on nuts, yoghurt, crackers and hummus, and other healthy foods instead of junk food. Stock up on protein and fibre.

BE ACTIVE

Exercise promotes the release of endorphins, chemicals that enhance your sense of wellbeing and improve your mood.

Every hour get up and walk around, stretch, climb the stairs, or have a dance party!



SNOOZE

Low light causes your brain to prepare for more sleep than it does in the summer months.

Try going to bed 20-30 minutes earlier or have a 30 minute power nap during the day.



BOOST YOUR VITAMIN D

Vitamin D plays an important role in keeping our bones and muscles healthy, and low levels can contribute to mood disorders including depression and seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Eat oily fish like tuna and mackerel, red meat, liver, egg yolks and fortified cereals and take supplements.



SOAK UP THE RAYS

Light therapy can be helpful in fighting the winter blues and involves daily exposure to a bright specialist light, usually for a couple of hours a day.

Make the most of the natural light or invest in a SAD light.

GO DRY IN JULY

Give up alcohol in July, it will help keep your mind alert and focused.

If you're not a drinker cut out foods containing refined sugars or caffeine.



GET CREATIVE

Creative activities can be therapeutic as they can help you switch off from day to day pressures, turn negative thoughts of feelings into something positive.

Paint, take photos, start a journal.



TALK TO SOMEONE

Social contact can lift your mood.

Talk on the phone, make a Skype call, FaceTime someone, ask people to come and visit you.



FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

01

CONNECT

Talk and listen.
Be there.
Feel connected.

02

GIVE

Your time.
Your words.
Your presence.

03

TAKE NOTICE

Appreciate the little things.
Savour the moment.

04

KEEP LEARNING

Embrace new experiences.
See opportunities.
Surprise yourself.

05

BE ACTIVE

Do what you can.
Enjoy what you do.
Move your mood.

Visit www.mentalhealth.org.nz for more tips.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/ways-to-wellbeing/>

