



Top winter wellness tips

Don't let the chilly weather affect your health. Our experts share their top tips on how to stay healthy during the colder months with Charmaine Yabsley.

Eat seasonally

"There are so many different types of fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season over winter," says dietitian Jenna Obeid. "They are full of flavour and more affordable than in their off-season: citrus, carrots, pumpkin, and spinach are great options, providing a different set of micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) as well as dietary fibre. Carrots are high in vitamin A which is important for supporting the health of mucosal tissue, the body's first line of defence against cold and flu bugs; spinach contains iron, folate, vitamin K, calcium, and B-group vitamins; and citrus fruits are packed with vitamin C, for a healthy immune system."

Sup on soup

"This recipe is made with real wholefood ingredients that all nourish your immune system," says naturopath Casey-Lee Lyons.

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 teaspoons ground or freshly grated turmeric
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1.5 kg pumpkin (I use Kent)
- 750ml stock or broth
- sea salt
- cracked black pepper
- fresh chilli, coriander, or parsley to serve

Sauté garlic, turmeric, and cumin in oil over medium heat for one minute, or until fragrant. Add pumpkin, stock or broth, salt and pepper, and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce to a

simmer for 15 minutes, or until pumpkin is tender. Puree soup using a food processor, blender or stick blender. Serve hot with fresh chilli and coriander or parsley on top.

Add some oils

"Winter worsens dry skin, cracked lips, itchy scalp, and brittle hair," says INDAH founder Teisha Lowry. "Use a room humidifier or oil diffuser, adding cinnamon or eucalyptus oil to clear pollutants. Be mindful of central heating as it dries out the body, internally and externally. Increase essential fatty acids in your diet, as they nourish your body from the inside out, keeping inflammation to a minimum."

Adapt and resist

Wellness practitioner Darren Cox says, "We get sick is because we fail to adapt to the changing season. Get out in the sun, and focus on nutrient-dense ingredients: bone broth, butter, ghee, coconut oil. Your immune system's first line of defence is the gut, so incorporate a gut-healing protocol. Useful supplements include vitamin D3, fish oil, vitamin B-complex, probiotics, and ArmaForce from BioCeuticals."

Drink, drink, drink

"Dehydration can sneak up on you in winter," says fitness motivator Dani Stevens. "Try warm water with a squeeze of lemon and a dash of manuka honey and ginger to keep your immune system fighting fit. And keep a bottle of water with you."

Meet our experts



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Make it herbal

"Drink different herbal teas throughout the day," says fitness trainer Bek Strachan. "A warm cup of peppermint or rose tea keeps my skin hydrated."

Take it to the barre

"Winter is a great time to enjoy indoor activities and sports," says Renee Scott. "Try a Barre Class such as Barre Attack, which is a full-bodied workout using attainable ballet moves, functional movement patterns, and cardio intervals to get you longer, leaner and fitter quicker. The class involves a ballet barre, resistance bands and balls to trim, tone and align the body, guaranteed to get a sweat up and give you visible results in just a few weeks!"

Mix it up

"A varied diet is a crucial foundation for immune health," says dietitian Megan Alsford. "Aim for a range of different colours from each of the five food groups to capture more of the micronutrients needed

for immunity, such as vitamins A, B6, and C, and zinc. Ensure you get enough vitamin D, which can be difficult with fewer sunlight hours. You'll find small amounts of vitamin D in eggs and fatty fish like salmon, but speak to your health professional about a supplement if your sun exposure is minimal. With 70 percent of your immune function being in the gut, take care of it with immune-supportive probiotics, whole grains, and prebiotic veggies like asparagus."

Weigh in

"Weight training will give you better muscle definition and dramatically increase your ability to work hard with other forms of exercise," says personal trainer Kris Cochrane. "A total-body training (TBT) routine is where you train different body parts in one workout - it's more effective, as you hit all muscle groups several times each week."

Brew bone broth

"Bone broth is rich in vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and skin- and joint-supportive collagen and chondroitin sulphate," says nutritionist Fiona Tuck. "It is particularly good for bones, joints, gut, immune system, skin, nails and hair. The more we rest, recuperate and nourish ourselves in winter, the more energy we have to flourish in spring."

- 500g of chicken necks
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 3-4 chicken feet
- 1 brown onion, including skin, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks including leaves, chopped
- herbs of your choice (turmeric, parsley, coriander, oregano, dulse flakes)
- filtered water

Place all dry ingredients in a crockpot or slow cooker. Add water until crockpot is three-quarters full. Add vinegar. Bring to the boil and leave to simmer for eight to 24 hours. Strain broth to remove bones and store in a glass container in the fridge for up to five days. If using meat bones instead of chicken, include joint bones to provide extra collagen, which is particularly good for your joints, skin, nails, and bones.

Enjoy winter walks

"Our bodies require the same amount of movement in winter as during summer," says wellness expert Belinda Norton-Smith. "Aim to go for a walk every day. I like to go before breakfast as it warms up your body ready for the day: wear warm clothing and enjoy the crisp, brisk air."



Embrace the cold

"Just because it's gloomy and grey outside doesn't mean you have to be," says counsellor Luke Sheedy. "Relish winter pleasures, such as feeling the warmth of a hot drink between your cold hands, or snuggling into warm pyjamas and tucking into a bowl of nourishing soup. If your mind drifts and you're only thinking about your cold feet and chapped lips, refocus on the positives."

Boost your immunity

"Eat home-made soups and slow-cooked casseroles containing turmeric, onions, garlic, and seasonal vegetables," says food coach Jasmine Makings. "Take a good probiotic powder, preferably a combination of fermented foods. Drink hot water with lemon juice, turmeric, ginger and a dash of natural raw honey, adding the grated lemon rind for extra vitamin C. The herb echinacea is also a wonderful immune system booster."

Follow a five-point plan

Personal trainer Katie Carmichael recommends the following five points for a healthy winter: "Eat foods high in vitamin C; exercise regularly - moderate levels of regular exercise have a long-term cumulative effect; stay connected - socialising keeps you active and reduces stress levels; create a relaxing bedtime routine of listening to soft music or soaking in a warm bath; avoid electronics and turn lights down low an hour before bed; and drink at least two litres of water daily."

Return to your roots

"Winter is a prime time for root vegetables, which are deeply nourishing" says nutritionist Carolina Rossi. "Not sure how to cook them? Beetroot: peel and grate them raw over salad, or roast until tender. Carrots: cut into sticks and serve with hummus or avocado dip. Onions: sauté and add to soups and stews, or roast with other winter veggies."

Add herbs

"Your body's defence system is only as dependable as the support it gets," says naturopath Shannon McNeill. "Studies show that getting enough rest, quality nutrition, and exercise while reducing unhealthy habits and avoiding processed foods optimises the immune system. Herbs also boost immunity, especially garlic (boasts antimicrobial, antibacterial and anti-neoplastic properties), ginger (reduces inflammation and cold symptoms) and turmeric (contains curcumin, which has antioxidant, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and stomach-soothing benefits)."

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Reach for the stars

"Flower essences such as star jasmine uplift the psyche and relieve feelings of heaviness," says mystical nutritionist Devon Battaglia. "Lemon balm offers deep relaxation, anxiety relief, and a feeling of peace. Lovage provides a sense of motivation, joy, and confidence to help you move forward in harmony with nature's cycles."

Strike a pose

"Yoga and reiki are great ways to stay healthy in winter, and you can practise both even if you have a cold," says yoga teacher Jayne Boyle. "Yoga reduces stress hormones and calms nervous system activity. Reiki also assists with relaxation by calming and balancing the energy centres. By supporting the healthy flow of energy within the chakras, you can achieve optimum health and wellbeing."

Crunch it out

"Exercise increases production of endorphins, the 'happy hormones'," says Lana Kennedy. "It also plays an important role in maintaining healthy gut bacteria. Try doing yoga poses or stomach crunches as soon as you wake up to improve blood flow to the intestines and colon, which in turn keeps your digestive system healthy."

Supplement your health

"Fatigue, slow-healing wounds, and chronic infections are signs that your immune system is not functioning optimally," says naturopath Corinne Bett. "Supplements may help: vitamin C, olive leaf, echinacea, and andrographis stimulate the immune system and reduce severity of common cold symptoms, such as sore throat, upper respiratory catarrh, bronchial cough, and fever."

Add some beans

"Legumes are fantastic for gut health, due to their prebiotic fibre content," says dietitian Chloe McLeod. "Adding chickpeas, lentils and kidney beans to soups and casseroles is an easy way to feel satisfied and healthy all winter long." ❄️



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