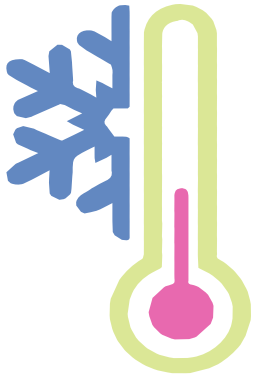


## Beat the Winter Blues

[to make healthy choices]

Studies show that extreme weather changes can **negatively** affect mental health. Be mindful of how winter weather can impact your mental health and **be prepared to fight the winter blues.**

(THE KIM FOUNDATION)



### Why Does Winter Get You Down?

- >> Winter days are shorter, with **less sunshine**. This lack of sunlight means we get **less Vitamin D** and our bodies produce **less serotonin** (a neurotransmitter associated with happiness) and **more melatonin** (a chemical associated with depression, sleepiness and fatigue).
- >> During cold months, people stay inside more and **detach from normal activities**, which can **increase depression**.

(FORBES)

## HOW TO BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

**Exercise:** Thirty minutes of daily physical activity is not only a fantastic outlet for stress, it can also help your body release endorphins, your natural "happy hormones."



**Eat well:** Eating a nutritious diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables and fish will help boost your mood and provide energy.

**Meditate:** Even just a 10-minute session every other day can be helpful to check in with your body and re-set your mind.

**Connect:** Have a quick call or a cup of coffee with a friend or family member. These connections strengthen your sense of community and provide you with a strong support system when you feel down.



**Laugh:** Some studies show that laughter stimulates processes in your brain that counter depressive symptoms, so fire up a funny movie or read a humorous book to get laughing.

**Get help:** If you can't shake your feelings of sadness or depression, seek professional help. A visit with your healthcare provider can offer insight and additional support for overcoming these symptoms.

(HARVARD & EVERYDAY HEALTH)

