Beat the Winter Blues

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.

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.

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.

FORBES

(HARVARD & EVERYDAY HEALTH)