

Adjusting to shorter days and longer nights



How to boost your serotonin and avoid the January Blues

The changing seasons are known to disrupt hormones, such as serotonin and melatonin, which regulate sleep, mood, and feelings of wellbeing – so we've put together a few handy ideas to avoid the January Blues.

Grab some sunshine

Time in the sun can boost your serotonin levels, so try to go outside or into nature for at least 10-15 minutes a day (weather-permitting of course).

Revisit your diet

Tryptophan-rich food is key; it's an amino acid that converts to serotonin and can be found in things like salmon, brown rice, oatmeal and nuts.

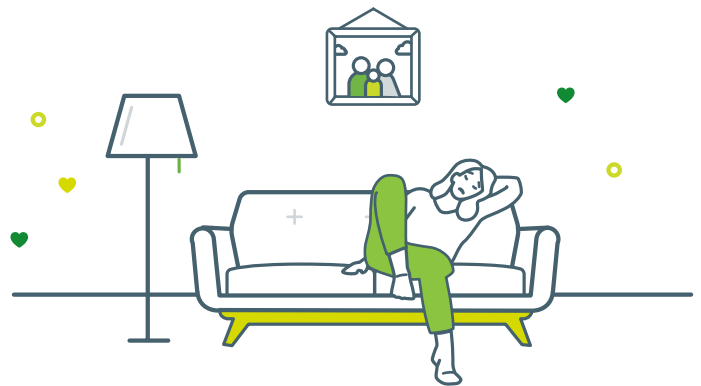
Get active

Exercise helps release tryptophan into your blood and aerobic activities are especially beneficial, for example cycling, jogging, swimming, or dancing.



Massage therapy

Massage therapy can increase serotonin and dopamine levels. It can also help reduce cortisol, a hormone your body makes when stressed.



Mood induction

Try thinking about what makes you happy, it can help increase serotonin in your brain, which improves your mood. For example, you could visualise a happy memory or look at photos of things that make you happy.



Manage stress levels and emotions

Reducing stress can benefit both your mood and overall health. A few things you can try to manage your stress levels and emotions include yoga, journaling, therapy, breathing exercises, and listening to calming music.



Touching base with loved ones

Socialising and connecting with people you love is essential for many aspects of wellness. Animals can lend a paw too; you could volunteer at a shelter or just hug your pet.

An act of kindness

Doing something nice for someone else can help you as well! Being kind can raise your serotonin levels and improve your mood.

Laughter

Stress hormones like cortisol can be reduced by laughing. Laughter really is the best medicine.

Some handy definitions



Serotonin is a hormone and a neurotransmitter involved in the function of several different organ systems in the body. It affects wellbeing and happiness.

Melatonin is a hormone your brain creates in response to darkness. It regulates your sleep-wake cycles and night sleep cycles acting as a time cue for day and night.

Tryptophan is an amino acid your body uses to make melatonin and serotonin.

Cortisol is your body's main stress hormone. It controls fear, mood, and motivation by working with certain parts of your brain.



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