

Top tips for improving your mood and helping your immune system

During winter time it can be very tempting to snuggle up on the sofa with a hot chocolate. But as nice as it sounds, there are better ways to support your health and wellbeing in the cold and dark months. Here's how to make nutrition and exercise your best friends...

Broccoli, peppers and cashew nuts will support your immune system and help you avoid infections. Lentils and pumpkin seeds improve moods whilst your metabolism will benefit from protein found in lean meat, dairy, beans and peanuts.

Go outside for a brisk walk every day. Walking has a great effect on your health and, if

done regularly, can help in reducing your cholesterol levels, balancing your blood pressure and boosting your mood.

Instead of having three big meals try more snacks or small meals. If you choose foods with a low Glycemic Index like vegetables, fruit, wholegrain carbohydrates or a source of protein, your blood sugar will remain steady and you won't be hungry. Reduce your intake of sugar, alcohol, fizzy drinks and

processed foods but don't be afraid of healthy fats – foods like nuts and avocado will fill you up without causing weight gain!

Try these easy swaps – a little goes a long way!

- Leave the meat and have a vegetarian main meal once a week
- Park your car a few blocks away from where you need to go and walk
- Reduce sugar and replace it with cinnamon
- Use Greek yoghurt instead of sour cream
- Reduce salt and use herbs instead
- Replace white bread, rice and pasta with whole grain versions
- Swap your sweetened cereal with porridge
- Brush your teeth after dinner to avoid snacking
- Swap fizzy drinks for water with a splash of lemon juice
- Eat whole fruit instead of drinking fruit juice
- If you can, buy local produce instead of supermarket fruit and veg
- Eat from a smaller plate! It works!

Carola Becker, Nutritional Therapist and Corporate Wellbeing Speaker, helps people to live healthier lives through personalised online nutrition coaching, tailored around their lifestyle and needs. Find out more at www.life-is-good.co.uk

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