



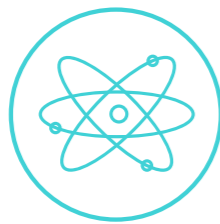
# Winter Wellbeing Tips

Supporting you and your family and friends with your wellbeing through the winter period.

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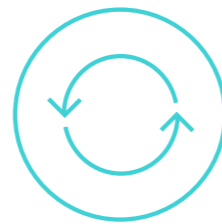
PHYSICAL  
WELLBEING



MENTAL  
WELLBEING



FINANCIAL  
WELLBEING



SOCIAL  
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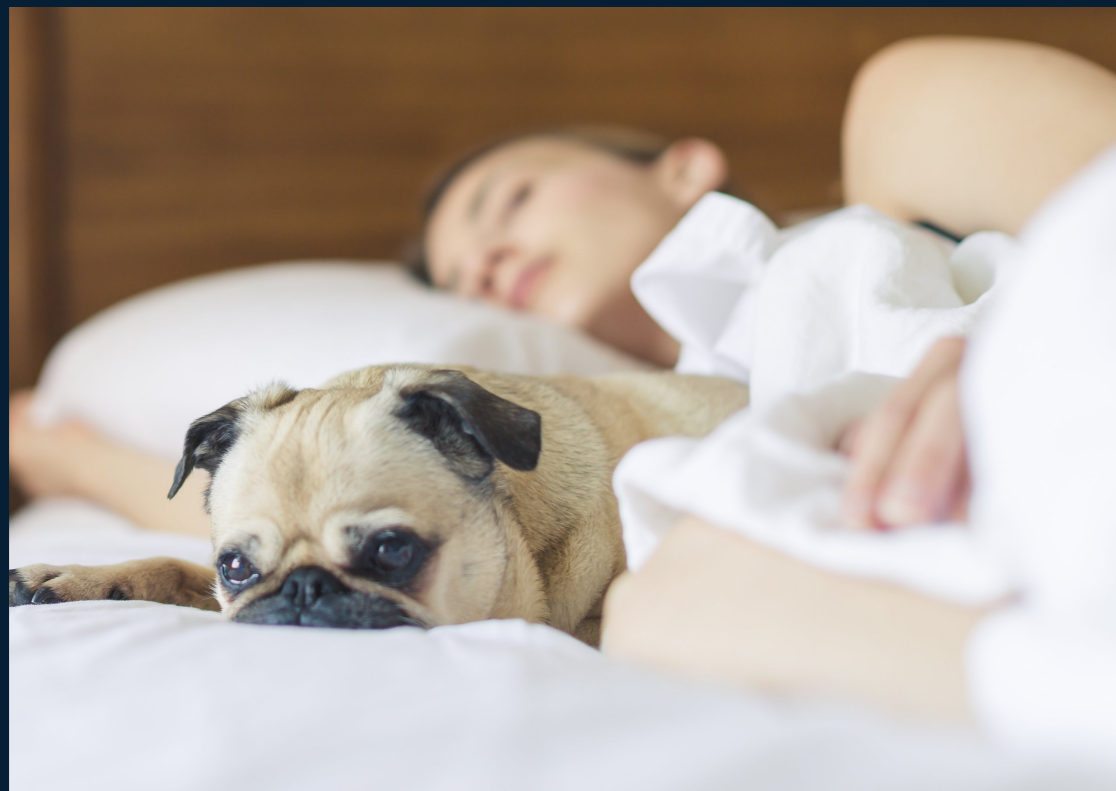
With so much uncertainty in 2020, as we head into winter, there is still so many things we can do to impact our health positively. Our expert team have come up with some winter wellbeing top tips, to support you with your mental, physical and social health this winter.

For further support, you can also contact the hero team via [hello@herowellbeing.com](mailto:hello@herowellbeing.com)

# Maintain a healthy sleep / wake cycle

Whilst hibernation mode is always tempting in Winter, over sleeping can in fact leave you feeling more sluggish throughout the day. Research suggests that following a regular sleep wake routine, rather than adopting erratic sleeping patterns can leave you feeling healthier, more energised and happier as a result. Life will inevitably interfere but aiming to sleep between 7-9 hours per night uninterrupted will positively impact all other areas of manageable health - nutrition, active minutes and stress management!

**Samantha Gaunt. Head of Content & Delivery, hero**



## Get Outside!

My tip for winter is the importance of still getting outside for 20 minutes a day!

A 20-minute run would be great, a 20-minute walk just as good. So, take a break from working at home, embrace the colder weather and get out for 20-minutes once a day.

**Jamie Peacock MBE. ex Rugby England Captain, Motivational Speaker & Mentor, hero**

# Move!

Movement helps with the flow of blood around the body and blood is responsible for circulating nourishment into your cells and removing waste. In fact, encouraging strong blood circulation and clearing of toxins not only helps your physical wellbeing, it has a direct correlation to reducing levels of anxiety and better overall emotional stability.

The biological function of the human brain is to create complex movements. This doesn't necessarily mean creating fancy moves for the sake of it, what it does mean is we function at our most optimal when we move regularly, particularly outside in nature.

Choose an exercise you genuinely enjoy and that allows you to breathe comfortably and consistently without feeling stressed.

If time is a constraint; add in little bits of movement throughout the day:

- Park further away from the supermarket entrance, walk to the next bus stop, take the stairs, take a quick walk around the block, it all adds up throughout the day/month/year and you will find yourself feeling stronger, happier and healthier for it.

- Yoga is particularly effective for calming the nervous system and reducing stress levels.

- Walking outside allows you to connect with nature, breathe and switches off your monkey mind.

- Running can be like moving meditation, make sure you settle into a comfortable breathing rhythm. If you are a beginner, start with 1 min walking/ 1 min running slowly x 5 and keep it manageable but stay consistent and you will progress quickly.

- Strength Training and Weight Lifting have extraordinary effects on mental wellbeing and physical wellbeing. You will find when working on developing your physical strength it will have a direct correlation with improving your mental strength. This is a very effective tool during the challenging times we find ourselves living in.



# Breathe!

The single most effective way to reduce stress levels and boost our immunity during winter is to take conscious, deep, abdominal breaths. Breathing will calm your mind, reduce tension and keep your blood oxygenated. And proper breathing techniques can directly reduce inflammation levels in the body.

If you find yourself getting worked up, tense and anxious you will notice yourself breathing into your chest, this activates your sympathetic system and heightens your stress levels. In turn, slow, calm breathing into your belly, activates your parasympathetic system triggering a release of neurohormones, that inhibit stress producing hormones and help you to relax, reduce tension and anxiety.

Find a quiet spot in your home or your office, place your hands on your belly and breathe into your abdominals, feel your belly raise and breathe out slowly, repeat as many times as you like until you start to feel calmer and more relaxed. Do this regularly throughout the day, it is like pressing the reset button.



# Eat Seasonal

Cold foods really slow down the digestion process and your body has to work harder to compensate, which can make you feel depleted and places stress on your immune system throughout the winter months.

Before supermarkets became available, human beings, could only eat what was available in their natural surroundings and our biology hasn't changed much, so we function optimally and benefit when eating foods that are in season.

Choose stews, soups, broths, curries with plenty of warming spices and warm drinks such as chai tea.

Prepare and batch cook on a weekend and freeze, so you are ready for the week ahead, which saves time in the long run and you benefit from not choosing last minute take away or processed foods.

# Grab a hot shower and body brush

It is vital throughout the winter that you keep your circulation and blood flow moving. If you find yourself getting cold and run down, have a hot shower or bath to encourage blood flow and follow by body brushing. Use a fine haired brush (boar's hair brushes work really well) and always brush up in the direction of your heart, from down to up. This will help boost circulation, encourage lymphatic drainage and eliminates toxins from the body.

**Georgie Britt. Performance & Wellbeing Coach, hero**



# Stay mobile, avoid freezing up!

Try and get up for 20 seconds every 20 minutes to keep pain & stiffness away - especially in the cold!

**Ed Madeley. Osteopath, hero**



# Wash your hands!

In terms of my personal strategy and top tip for winter wellbeing it still has to be hand washing and doing it properly and regularly with soap and water, closely followed by making sure you get time in the fresh air and out of crowded areas on a daily basis no matter how cold it gets!

**Rowena Wood – Women's Health & Wellbeing Coach at hero**

# Eat healthy & hearty meals!

The cold weather and dark evenings often leave us craving comfort foods and more often than not they are not the best choices. There are plenty of healthy, hearty warming meals you can prepare, my favourite is the winter vegetable soups. Ingredients, such as kale, brussel sprouts, root vegetables (sweet potato, carrots and turnips) which will not only keep you warm and cosy in the evenings, but will keep your immune system high.

If you know exercising in the dark mornings and evenings exercise is not going to happen, be proactive and rearrange your schedule, switch things up, make the most of your lunch break and early afternoons, whether it's a jog outside, or an afternoon class. If you're working from home, you could even do some HIIT sessions or yoga without leaving your house.

**Shannon Casey. Wellbeing Coach at hero**



# Increase your fruit and veg intake!

Support your immune system with a greater intake of essential vitamins, minerals and fibre. With less than 30% of people meeting the 5-a-day recommendation, this is something most of us can improve on:

- Add fruit, nuts or seeds to your cereal, porridge and yoghurt.
- Bulk out meals with vegetables, beans and pulses.
- Remember frozen counts too, so buy frozen fruit and veg for a quick, nutritious addition to meals (with the added benefit of avoiding food waste!).

**Rebecca Nix. Nutritionist & Wellbeing Coach, hero**

## Embrace it!

Embrace the dark mornings and dark evenings. For many the darker days feel more of a struggle, however can we welcome the darker evenings to take life a little slower? Give yourself permission to spend the evenings reading a book, watching your favourite film with loved ones and recharging your batteries for the challenges ahead of a new day. You don't need to feel guilty or lazy in order to do this, because you can try a short outdoor walk/activity to start your day and still see the natural daylight.

**Vicky Fytche. Senior Wellbeing Coach, hero**

# Fill the dark mornings with pockets of Joy!

In the darkness of the winter period, I think its super important to stay connected with the small things in life that bring you joy on a personal level. From my own personal perspective, I love to read on topics such as personal growth and learning. In the winter months, I find I can easily spend that little bit longer in bed for the desire of the warm sheets as opposed to the cold floors. So, I make sure I fill my morning routine with just 20-30 minutes of joy, so that I know that my first section of the day is a pleasure and not a chore. For you, this could be anything from walking the dog, listening to the radio or meditation. Wherever you find your small pockets of joy, be sure to fill each day with a bitesize version and be sure to do it often!

**David Drake. Performance & Wellbeing Coach, hero**



# Supplement with Vitamin D

My top winter wellbeing tip would be to ensure that we are supplementing with vitamin D.

It has come to media attention recently as something which may aid in protecting from Covid.

This is mainly due to the fact that this vitamin plays a vital role in modulating the innate and adaptive immune system. Immune health is always important in protecting us from viruses and pathogens, but even more so now. Deficiency has been linked with an increased susceptibility to infection.

Vitamin D is associated with a wide range of benefits including increased cognition, previously mentioned immune health, bone health and a greater sense of positive wellbeing.

The body produces vitamin D from cholesterol, provided there is an adequate amount of UV light from sun exposure. There tends to be only a sufficient amount of UV light coming from the sun when the UV index is 3 or higher, which only occurs year-round near the equator. In the UK, especially during the winter months where the sun is less present day to day, we can be below optimal levels.

Foods that contain vitamin D include oily fish, red meat, liver, egg yolks, tuna, some fat spreads and fortified foods. However, the amount needed to have optimal levels is hard to achieve via food alone hence why supplementation is often advised year round with a higher dose advisable in the winter months (October to March).

**Dom Haigh. Nutritionist & Wellbeing Coach, hero**



# Meditation coupled with heart opening Yoga!

Once winter hits it is all about keeping your immune system strong! Stress can be the immune system's worst enemy. Meditation coupled with some heart opening yoga poses can not only help fight stress but also help you avoid getting colds and flu. Heart opening yoga postures such as cobra pose and bridge pose stimulate blood flow to the thymus which is the immune system's frontline. Give yourself 10 minutes daily to find a guided meditation and move through some heart opening. Beat the stress through relaxing both body and mind!

**Taylor Selby. 200hr Yoga & Wellbeing Coach, hero**



## Train listening to your body!

Our body is constantly communicating with us, whether it's hunger, exercise, connection to others or rest we need - our body will send us the message. Thus, if we learn to connect with our body through, for example, practising mindfulness, meditation, or journaling, we can read our physical and psychological needs way faster. Especially in winter, we sometimes simply do not have as much energy as during the bright summer months and that's okay! Give your body what it needs and show compassion towards yourself!

**Laura Schober. Positive Psychology & Wellbeing Coach, hero**

If you're looking for more support for yourself or with your teams wellbeing throughout lockdown, get in touch to find out more about virtual wellbeing seminars and workshops, and telephone coaching sessions.

**Email: [hello@herowellbeing.com](mailto:hello@herowellbeing.com)**