



The World's Fastest Indian
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East Bridgewater Council on Aging

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East Bridgewater Council on Aging

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Beating Winter's Woes

If your mood is as cold and dark as your landscape, you're in good company. But here's how you can ease that seasonal slump.

By Sid Kirchheimer

Now that the Christmas tree is composting and radio stations have shelved that cheery holiday music until next winter, let's get real with some rewriting: 'Tis the season to be melancholy. The gloom caused by Mother Nature each winter in much of the country is biologically felt to some degree by an estimated one in four of us—usually starting around October and then magically ending by April with spring's thaw. For most people, it manifests as winter doldrums, the "I-can't-wait-for-winter-to-end" feeling. This can stem from our sensitivity to the lack of sunlight that results from winter's "shorter" days and disrupts our internal body



clock. One solution is to get as much sunlight as possible. In addition to sunlight—or more specifically, the lack of it—the cold temperatures of this mean season may also play a role. "There is some evidence that people with a higher tolerance to cold tend to be less depressed than those who are more susceptible to cold," says Charles Raison, MD. Here are some other suggestions to help beat the winter blues.

Change Your Routine: It's not necessarily the weather itself that brings on the blahs,

but the fact that the weather can keep you indoors. Change your routine and head outdoors for a brisk walk with a friend.

Deep Breathing: We all know how to breath, but too many of us breathe with short, shallow breaths. A daily deep breathing session of just one minute in the morning and again in the evening will remove much of the clutter in your brain. Deep breathing also helps calm that "cabin fever" feeling.

Exercise: Low to moderate intensity physical activity for 30 to 90 minutes every day induces positive changes in our immune systems. An easy walk through the park is a great way to keep your body and mind fresh. Hibernation is great for bears, not so for humans.

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