

Quay points

The Patient Newsletter for East Quay Medical
Centre
Winter addition 2024/5



Ways to wipe out winter tiredness

Do you find it harder to roll out of bed in winter when the temperature drops, and the mornings are darker? If so, you're not alone. Many people feel tired and sluggish during winter.

Here are five energy-giving solutions that may help - and some conditions that can sometimes be the cause.

1. Let in some sunlight

As the days become shorter, your sleep and waking cycles may become disrupted. The lack of sunlight means your brain produces more of a hormone called melatonin, which makes you sleepy.



Open your blinds or curtains as soon as you get up to let more sunlight into your home and get outdoors in natural daylight as much as possible. Try to take even just a brief lunchtime walk, and make sure your workplace and home are as light and airy as possible.

2. Get a good night's sleep

Getting enough undisturbed sleep is vital for fighting off winter tiredness.

It's tempting to go into hibernation mode when winter hits, but that sleepy feeling you get does not mean you should snooze for longer.



In fact, if you sleep too much, chances are you'll feel even more sluggish during the day. We do not actually need any more sleep in winter than we do in summer - aim for about 8 hours of shut-eye a night and try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.

Make sure your bedroom helps you feel relaxed and sleepy: clear the clutter, have comfortable and warm bedding, and turn off the TV.

3. Get regular exercise

Exercise may be the last thing you want to do when you're feeling tired on dark winter evenings. But you might be surprised by how energetic you feel after getting involved in some kind of physical activity every day.



Exercise in the late afternoon may help to reduce early-evening fatigue and also improve your sleep. Try to reach the recommended goal of 150 minutes of exercise a week.

Winter is a great time to experiment with new and different kinds of activity.

For instance, if you're not used to doing exercise, book a session at one of the many open-air skating rinks that operate during the winter. Skating is good all-round exercise for everyone, including beginners. There are also many dry ski slopes and indoor snow centres in the UK, which will offer courses for beginners.

If you're feeling like being more active, arrange a game of badminton at your local sports centre, or a game of tennis or 5-a-side football under the floodlights.

If you find it hard to get motivated to exercise in the colder, darker months, focus on the positives – you not only will feel more energetic but may also avoid putting on weight during the winter.

4. Learn to relax

Are you feeling pressured to get everything done during the shorter daylight hours? If so, it may be contributing to your tiredness – stress has been shown to contribute to tiredness.



There's no quick fix for stress, but there are some simple things you can do to help to reduce it. Many people find adding meditation, yoga, breathing exercises or mindfulness techniques into their day helps them to calm down and feel more relaxed.

5. Eat the right food

Being overweight or underweight can affect your energy levels and leave you feeling sleepy. So, it's important to make sure you eat a healthy, balanced diet.



Once the summer ends, there's a temptation to ditch the salads and fill up on starchy foods such as pasta, potatoes and bread. However, you'll have more energy if you include plenty of fruit and vegetables in your comfort meals.

Winter vegetables – such as carrots, parsnips, swede and turnips – can be roasted, mashed or made into soup to provide a warming winter meal for the whole family. And classic stews and casseroles are great options if they're made with lean meat or pulses, and plenty of veg.

You may find your sweet tooth going into overdrive in the winter months but try to avoid foods containing lots of sugar. They may give you a rush of energy, but it's one that wears off quickly.

Do I have a health condition?

While it's normal for all of us to slow down over winter, there are some medical conditions that could be causing your tiredness.

Sometimes a lack of energy and enthusiasm (lethargy) can be a sign of winter depression. Known medically as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), it affects around 1 in 15 people, but it can be treated.

If your tiredness is severe and present all year round, you could have chronic fatigue syndrome.

Your tiredness may also be linked to a condition like anaemia, or a long-term infection that your body is trying to clear.

If your tiredness is stopping you from going about your normal life, or goes on for a long time, you should talk to a GP.

Article: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/5-ways-to-wipe-out-winter-tiredness/>

Travel vaccination advice



If you're planning to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some of the serious diseases found in other parts of the world.

Vaccinations are available to protect you against infections such as yellow fever, typhoid and hepatitis A.

In the UK, the NHS routine immunisation (vaccination) schedule protects you against a number of diseases, but does not cover all of the infectious diseases found overseas.

When should I start to think about the vaccines I need?

Some vaccines need to be given well in advance to allow your body to develop immunity and some vaccines involve a number of doses spread over several weeks or months.

You may be more at risk of some diseases, for example, if you're:

- Travelling to rural areas
- Back packing
- Staying in hostels or camping
- On a long trip rather than a package holiday
- If you have a pre-existing health problem, this may make you more at risk of infection or complications from a travel-related illness.

Vaccinations are available from your GP surgery and at private travel clinics. Some travel vaccinations are free but others will incur a cost and not all vaccinations are available from your GP surgery and only available at travel clinics. So, pick up a travel form now from your surgery as soon as you know your plans.

Know your numbers – tackling high blood pressure

Around 3 in 10 adults in Somerset have high blood pressure but 1 in 10 do not know it, as there are often no symptoms. It is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and significantly increases the risk of having a heart attack or stroke, – but early detection and treatment can help people live longer, healthier lives.

It's important for adults of all ages to check their blood pressure. In Somerset, we estimate there are around 40,000 people with hypertension who do not know they have it, so our campaign gives you the chance to get the treatment and support you may need to lower your blood pressure and lead a long and healthy life

In Somerset, blood pressure monitoring kits can be loaned from libraries across the county. The kits can be loaned for a fortnight allowing people to check their blood pressure, in their own home

Anyone who discovers they have high blood pressure can take their results to their GP or other appropriate health professional, who can advise on the best treatment and support.

It's important to remember the dangers of high blood pressure can be easily resolved, with the right medications and lifestyle changes.

Article:

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/my-health/blood-pressure-check-nhs-somerset/>



Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) is dedicated to increasing the health and happiness of residents in Somerset through physical activity and sport.

SASP is a charitable trust and a member of the nation-wide network of 43 Active Partnership's, sharing a mission of transforming lives through sport and physical activity. Each Active Partnership is independent, governed by a Board of Trustees and funded through Sport England, and grant giving bodies, companies and individuals whom share their mission.

Our vision is to...

"Achieve healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity and sport"

We inspire and enable positive life choices through sport and physical activity and we do this by:

- Providing accessible opportunities locally for all ages and abilities, prioritising those who are least active.
- Addressing inequalities and removing barriers to physical activity and sport.
- Supporting clubs, communities, schools and the workforce to embrace physical activity.
- Bringing together organisations and partners to create positive change to enable active lives for all.

SASP health coaches are available at your GP surgery, so please enquire within, or call 01823 653990 enquires@sasp.co.uk

<https://www.sasp.co.uk/contact>



Bridgwater Bay
PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

You can now have your bloods done at Victoria Park Health and Wellbeing Hub

As long as you have the forms/labels or we have added them at the practice, the team at Victoria Park Health and Wellbeing Hub can take your blood.

The service is now Monday to Friday 8.45-12.45.

This is a walk in service (so there may be a slight delay)

Call 01278 720270

Bridgwater Bay PCN have produced a fantastic set of podcasts on womens health issues.

They are on Spotify but you can access them through any internet browser

They are 15 minutes long and provide a really helpful overview of various topics, from cancer screening to menopause to heavy menstrual bleeding

If you are a woman or have a woman in your life – please have a listen

<https://open.spotify.co/episode/4Z1slAbbWAcwscCUozI8SF>

<https://www.energynetworks.org/customers/find-my-network-operator>

Which?

TIPS AND ADVICE

Can I claim for a power cut caused by bad weather?

You are entitled to **£80** compensation if your power is out for more than **24 hours**, or **48 hours** if the weather is classified as a severe storm.

You'll get a further **£40** for every additional **6 hours** you are without power, up to a maximum of **£2,000**.



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Call us for free day or night on 116 123



We're here for anyone this Festive season who is...



Feeling alone



Having money worries



Dealing with grief



Struggling to cope