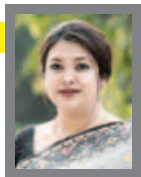


A NOTE ON NUTRITION

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What to eat during winter: Your essential diet for the season

We observe a drastic change in our food preferences, metabolism, and even energy levels during winter. With falling temperatures, our cravings for food also increase. However, no season justifies unhealthy eating habits, and we must maintain a balance in what we consume.

Irrespective of the season, we should make a proper meal plan to fulfill our nutritional needs.

Eat food that makes you feel warm

A bowl of hot soup with chicken broth and some vegetables will leave us rejuvenated. Consuming root vegetables like beets, carrots, and turnips (either boiled, raw, or roasted) can give us added benefits as they are full of vitamins A and C, potassium, and high levels of beta-carotene.

For those who love coffee, there is some good news too as coffee is believed to increase metabolism, and thus raise body temperature.

Meat should be a major part of the diet as it not only raises body temperature but also serves as an excellent source of iron, zinc, and protein. People with low iron content may have cold hands and feet, and tire easily. Red meat, such as beef, lamb, and mutton, is a good source of iron — an important mineral to help carry oxygen throughout our body.

Spices are a great way to maintain thermogenesis. Some of the superstars are ginger, cumin, pepper, sesame, and cinnamon.

Honey, as stand-alone or added-in in food items, will also help during winter as they are traditionally known as a cure for cough and cold. One note of caution, children can start having honey only after they turn one.

Almonds, cashews, and walnuts are a source of good fats and also help in

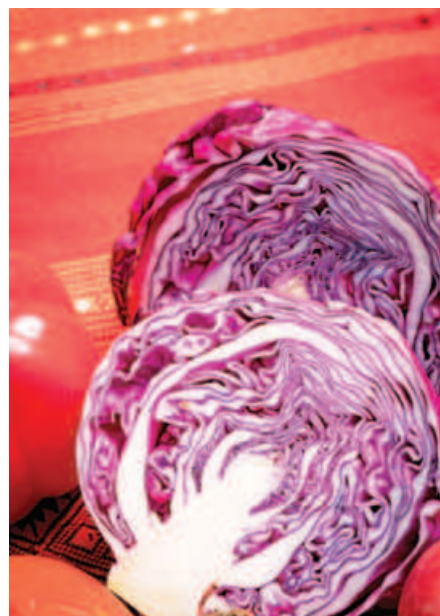
regulating body temperature.

Consume food rich in vitamins and mineral

Vitamin C plays an important role in boosting the immune system, which is likely to be weakened in winter. Vitamins are also essential for maintaining the health of our skin and the level of antioxidants.

Many people experience increased anxiety and depression during winter. To fight those seasonal bouts, one must increase the consumption of food rich in vitamin D like mushrooms, hilsa fish, egg yolk, fortified cereals, milk, and red meat.

Oatmeal is high in zinc (important for proper immune function) and soluble fibre



lemon, and kiwi are rich in vitamin C, as are broccoli, bell peppers, strawberries, and sweet potato.

Bananas being a good source of magnesium, are important for your thyroid and adrenal glands to function properly. These glands help regulate body temperature. Figs, dates, and olives are also good options.

And lastly, WATER!

A simple way to help your body stay warm this winter is to drink water. Water keeps our body functioning at its best and helps regulate our internal temperature. Dehydration causes our core temperature to drop, which may lead to hypothermia. As we get less thirsty, we are used to taking less water during this season.

What to avoid

People often feel tired and experience mood swings because the serotonin (hormone responsible for making us feel

(associated with cardiac health). Oats make us feel full and are a great source of whole grains and fibres, which can improve our cholesterol levels.

Spinach, legumes, pumpkin seeds, broccoli, and tofu are good sources of iron. Eggs have a good amount of high-quality protein, selenium, zinc, iron, copper, and vitamin D, B6, and B12.

Fish are rich sources of omega-3 fatty acids, protein, and vitamin D. All are needed to protect us from the harshness of winter. Edible flowers like broccoli and cauliflower pack a lot of vitamin C, which enhances immune functions.

Dairy products such as yoghurt, cheese, etc. pack a lot of vitamins B12 and A, proteins, and calcium, which boost a person's health. Drinking warm milk frequently will help you avoid falling ill.

Don't forget fruits in your diet

Fruits that are locally grown during this season are highly beneficial.

Citrus fruits, oranges, guava, mango,



good and happy) level drops in winter, which makes our body crave more carbohydrates. Emotional eating is also common at this time of the year. No matter what, avoid grabbing those sugary and processed snacks, which can drag down our mood over time.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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