

How the Change of Seasons Affects Our Health

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The clock has turned back one hour and the sun has gone into hibernation. This lack of sunshine not only dampens our mood but can lead to depression in the upcoming winter months. Serotonin is a chemical that influences a variety of body and psychological functions. When serotonin levels are low, we may lose focus, experience low energy levels, and/or a loss of interest in everyday activities. Additionally, it can cause us to sleep in excess amounts, which will leave the body feeling fatigued and muscles feeling sore.

It's natural to slow down during winter, but it's important to maintain a positive attitude during this time where darkness is prominent. If you catch yourself falling into a seasonal slump, take time to reflect on what will make you mentally and physically more pleased. If you don't know where to start, we are here to offer some tips on how to fight the disadvantages of the seasons changing.

Better the Mind and Your Body Will Thank You

If the change in season has you feeling fatigued all the time, making it hard for you to carry out daily tasks, then it is time to improve your mood. Doing things that make you happy can help prevent weight gain, feeling irritable, stressed, or anxious and unexplained aches and pains. In addition to exercising your mental health by participating in activities that you enjoy, exercise for your physical health to decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression.

To keep your mood and physical health stable throughout the New Year, incorporate these tips into your lifestyle.

- **Take care of your body** – You should always put your health before the health of others. Be sure to eat healthy foods, and take advantage of a good night sleep. Physical activity of any kind release endorphins – also known as natural stress fighters – so if you can, hit the gym or exercise in your own home.
- **Manage stress** – Unfortunately, there is no avoiding stress, therefore, you have to learn how to manage it. You can do this by meditating, taking a calming bath, listening to calming white noise during the day, or by simply venting to a person you trust.
- **Don't isolate from family and friends** – It's harder to be social when you feel down in the dumps, but being alone can make the feeling worse. Try to reach out to the people you trust as much as you can because even little interaction can make a difference.