



Winter nutrition tips

with Elaine



Mineral of the month: Zinc

Zinc is one of the best minerals to take in the winter months as this protects our immune system from the nasty seasonal bugs/viruses. Zinc is important for body growth and development, is anti-inflammatory, helps nerve function, digestion, aids metabolism and is also great for the skin. A sign of zinc deficiency is a lack of taste and smell (not covid!), wounds that heal slowly, loss of appetite, lack of alertness and unexplained weight loss.

Try eating more of the following to increase levels of zinc – shellfish, lean beef, pork and lamb, turkey, sardines/salmon, chickpeas, pumpkin seeds, almonds, cashews, kale, eggs and dark chocolate (min 70% cocoa).

I've mentioned previously that a great supplement to take is Sambucol which contains zinc and is anti-viral. [Holland & Barrett](#) have got some great offers on at the moment!

It's beginning to smell a lot like Christmas!

To keep your home smelling lovely and Christmassy, why not try the following:

Slice a couple of oranges in half, add a cinnamon stick, a couple of cloves, chop roughly a thumb size of fresh ginger and some star anise. Bring all the ingredients to boil in a saucepan and leave for a few minutes and your home will smell lovely. Once cooled, store the liquid in an airtight container and boil/reuse after a couple of days.

Herbs that heal:

Fresh and dried herbs are a great addition to salads, stews and soups – they can add flavour to meals and also have healing properties. Try the following to help with certain ailments:

Rosemary – great for coughs

Oregano – good for menstrual cramps

Coriander – helps with tiredness

Mint – good for stomach upsets

Parsley – helps reduce a bloated stomach

Basil – can lift mood

Curry powder – great for aching joints

Ginger – helps aid nausea



OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW!

(Thanks to Chelle for this idea!)

We're not quite ready to be looking ahead to the new year, but we are about to enter possibly the busiest time of year, which brings with it additional pressures on time and energy.

To get ahead, while you're up in the loft rooting around for last year's light up santa, why not take the opportunity to have a good old clear out and general de clutter. That jumper your mother-in-law gave you five years ago that's never seen the light of day; or that exercise bike that seemed a good idea in lock down that now stares at you guiltily from across the living room! Charity shops are crying out for stock ahead of Christmas gifting, so make room for the gift influx by clearing out that which you no longer need. Not only will it make you feel calmer ahead of the busyness, there are many other benefits to decluttering. It can:

- Help to reduce stress and anxiety levels
- Help to improve your sleep
- Boosts productivity and creativity
- Allows you to rediscover old treasures you forgot you had!
- Rids the home of allergens
- Can save you money, especially if you sell unwanted goods on eBay
- Makes it easier to keep the house clean and tidy

Top tip for keeping your turkey good and moist: for the first two hours of cooking, cook it breast side down. This ensures the breast meat is beautifully basted during cooking, keep the meat tender and delicious!





Christmas is coming by Andy Hofter

Christmas is a celebration; a time for giving and not simply a day we exchange gifts. The spirit of Christmas is in the 'togetherness', it's in the thought to which you put into thinking about others, a selfless time when we forgive, take stock of what's important and become 'better' versions of ourselves.

Whether you decide to be creative and make a gingerbread house or create an advent wreath, 'tis the season to have fun and be joyful. At home, at work or with friends, there will be plenty of time to share laughs and cheer, be that through the playing of board games or watching Christmas movies, spending the time with others is one of the five self-cares that will lead to better wellbeing for us all.

It's important to also remember that Christmas can also be a time of challenges, mentally or physically. If you find this time of year tough, try following these simple ten top tips:

1. Honesty – Try to be honest with people if you're finding things overwhelming. Maybe you're not feeling up to getting involved in everything – that's ok. Don't be afraid to cancel plans if you need to – sometimes you need to put yourself first.

2. Press pause – If you're someone who has a tendency to take on too much, the demands of Christmas can make this even worse. Remember you can only do so much. Stop if it's becoming too much and just try to relax and look after yourself.

3. Pyjamas! – In between all the social arrangements, make sure you have a day to hang out at home in your pyjamas. Christmas is the season of hanging out in your pyjamas.

4. Full moon – It's a full moon on Christmas day, so have a look at that if the sky is clear. It won't happen again for 19 years!

5. Get unstuck – Make sure to get a balance – try not to too sedentary, house-bound, spending all the time eating and drinking! A brisk walk outside is a nice way to spend time with loved ones, or a day trip somewhere helps blow away the cobwebs. Things can get quite intense if you're stuck in the house all the time – a bit of exercise helps too.

6. Don't believe the hype – Don't compare yourself and your Christmas with the representations of perfect Christmas moments on social media or on adverts. Remember that everyone is only sharing the good bits and that we don't know what is going on behind the scenes. Be mindful of what is true and what is not and follow what you truly believe.

7. Bed head – Give yourself a head start – try to go to bed early on Christmas Eve so you feel well-rested on the big day itself.

8. Talk – If you are feeling overwhelmed or under pressure, talk to someone about it. If you're worried about how you might feel on the day, talk to someone else who will be there too, so they can support you when needed during the festivities.

9. Plug yourself in – If you are staying in an overcrowded house with lots of noise and activity, make sure you take earplugs to maximise your chance of a decent night's sleep, remember the recommended is eight hours a night.

10. Give yourself a pressie – Make sure you take some time out after Christmas to do something you really want to do, no matter how small. Think about what you want to get out of the Christmas break and grab it with both hands and enjoy the moment.

Remember the top tip of all

We're always here to listen: give us a call, your colleagues, your line manager, your People Team, your wellbeing lead; we are all here. To listen, to support, to care, and most of all to help you have a wonderful Christmas this year.



Gingerbread Martini

Rumour has it that Santa's elves are particularly partial to gingerbread. Made with spiced caramel sauce, vodka and baileys, this fun Christmas cocktail will have the elves rocking on the sleigh!

Ingredients: 1/4 cup caramel sauce, 1/4 tsp mixed spice, 1/4 tsp ground ginger, 6 ice cubes, 1/2 cup thickened cream, 1/4 cup vodka, 1 tbsp Baileys Irish cream liqueur, whipped cream to serve, extra caramel sauce to serve, small gingerbread men, whole and crushed, to serve.

Method: Combine caramel sauce, mixed spice and ginger in a small jug. Place ice cubes, cream, caramel mixture, vodka and Baileys in a cocktail shaker. Secure lid. Shake well to combine. Pour into chilled serving glasses. Dollop with whipped cream. Drizzle with extra caramel sauce. Decorate with whole and crushed gingerbread men. Serve.

