



## BEAT THE JANUARY BLUES

Being armed with techniques to beat the January blues will help to get you through this time of the year unscathed.

January seems to do a good job of dampening the best of healthy intentions, with miserable weather, limited daylight and no festivities to warm the atmosphere.

Your New Year ambitions and intentions will be individual to you, but these techniques apply to all of us, helping to keep control and maintain motivation.

Establishing achievable goals and realistic targets will arm you with tools to avoid the January blues will achieve ongoing positive momentum.

### 1. Healthy Comfort Food

Comfort food is made for the Winter months, but this needn't be stodgy meals high in starchy carbohydrates. Foods such as potatoes, cake, pasta and biscuits will give you a boost in energy, but this will be followed by an energy slump. Instead, choose complex carbohydrates such as wholegrain cereals, rye bread, beans, pulses and fruit and vegetables.

### 2. Make an exercise plan

This doesn't mean that you suddenly need to take up a 5 day a week gym habit. Find what physical activity you enjoy, be it gym classes, group sports, even walking the dog. Incorporating something you enjoy into your life will make you more likely to maintain it, and it will also help to boost your mood through the release of serotonin – the 'happy hormone'.

### **3. Boost vitamin D**

Vitamin D has been shown to improve mood and strengthen the immune system. We naturally produce vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, but as we know, this is very limited throughout the Winter months. Eating foods high in vitamin D will help to boost your levels, therefore choose foods such as oily fish, dairy products, eggs and mushrooms.

[Click here](#) and type in your ingredient into our 'keywords' box in the centre of the page to find recipes that include them!

### **4. Omega-3 increase**

Omega-3 has been shown to help improve mood and depression. Maintaining a healthy and balanced life will be far easier with a healthy and balanced mindset.

Therefore, you would benefit from eating foods that contain high levels of omega-3. These are things such as oily fish, spinach, kale, walnuts and pumpkin seeds.

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### **5. Set achievable goals**

January can seem daunting, as we often set the bar too high with goals that simply aren't achievable. It is therefore unsurprising that many of us feel disappointed in ourselves and struggle to maintain the motivation to continue with our best intentions for much longer than a matter of weeks. Break down your goals into bite-sized chunks, this will mean you are able to achieve milestones frequently, helping to encourage morale.

### **6. Acknowledge success**

Acknowledge your successes. This can be in any form you like. Rewarding yourself when reaching a goal will make your journey an enjoyable one.

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