

Why Cold Weather Shouldn't Keep You Indoors

Source: [Jamieson](#)

With the cold gust of winter on our heels, it can be a challenge not to give in to the temptation of a warm fuzzy throw. But did you know that you're more likely to get sick at home than anywhere else? No?! Newsflash: your things are covered in bacteria! As you go about your day, touching, grabbing and moving around, you collect a bounty of microbes from near and far, every one of them increasing your chances of contracting immune-weakening germs. But though chillier weather may have you retreating back to your covers, it is worth remembering that whether sun or snow, your body is relying on you to keep it moving. So while it may be enticing to loaf through the colder months, there are many reasons why you shouldn't. Not sure what we mean? Here are 4 facts you should keep in mind this winter:

Staying active keeps your heart strong!

One thing is for certain: you and your heart need each other. Trafficking nutrients through your system, it is arguably one of your body's most vital allies. Strengthening your heart can have multiple positive effects on your body. Principally, since it is responsible for pumping your blood and keeping you moving, being active gives your heart the opportunity to efficiently manage levels of cholesterol and other fats. A healthy heart can also help you manage sugar levels and blood pressure, decreasing your risk of Type 2 Diabetes and aiding in weight management. Looking to double down on heart health this month? With the benefits of lowering heart rate and regulating blood pressure, omega-3s may be a great supplement to add to your regimen.

Cold weather exercise has your body working double time!

Ever notice that extra layer of sweat when you're running through the chill? That isn't an accident. Essentially, when the weather conditions drop, so does your body's core temperature. When you're bundled up and in the cold, the added perspiration is your body's natural response to its efforts against the elements. But don't be mistaken, it isn't the cold weather itself burning through the extra calories; it's your body's attempt to warm the cold air you are inhaling. Ergo, an increase in burned calories! This could mean great strides for your fitness goals. You also can't beat the satisfaction of the extra post-workout drizzle!

Let the sunshine in!

Cold weather and decreased sun exposure have a multitude of negative effects on your body. Not only do they impact your mood and motivation, but as we are wrapped in layers and further from the sun, our ability to produce vitamin D becomes crippled. With this nutrient being critical to bone health and maintaining a strong immune system, we're certain the solution won't be found on the sofa! This is where nutrient-dense foods like eggs and fish (or supplementation) step in! But what about your mood? Instantly increasing your serotonin levels, outdoor exercise is a natural remedy to the winter blues. Beyond that,

physical exercise is great for the immune system, promoting vasoconstriction, encouraging blood circulation, and ultimately helping you better stave off harmful, cold-causing germs and bacteria.

You are not a bear.

Hibernation is an evolutionary response to cold weather, scarcity of food and shelter. Primitively, mammals that hibernated were generally at a biological disadvantage and unable to acquire resources throughout the colder months. When the chill reached a pitch, not only did the trees dry up and soil turn hard, but these mammals lacked the energy to get the food they needed to sustain them. From then, hibernation began. In this state, the body slows in metabolism, breathing and heart rate, and animals fall into a deep slumber during which their bodies feed from fat reserves. Humans aren't designed for that response. As a species, this could have something to do with our high adaptability. We are, after all, the ultimate super predator. Because of our abilities to turn sticks into a roof and stones into fire, lack of food and shelter have never been our ultimate downfalls. So, instead of spending the winter nestled in your enclave, use your time indoors to get to things you couldn't normally get done like trying new recipes or home improvement! Or even better: get outside and enjoy the open air! You never know, you may love it!