

Defeating The Winter Doldrums

(NAPS)—Defeating the winter doldrums may seem daunting, but it can be done.

According to Ellie Krieger, registered dietitian and lifestyles counselor, there are several ways



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to keep the blues at bay. “Exercising, eating healthy foods and creating some imaginative activities can help people have a healthier, happier winter,” she said.

Following are a few of Ellie’s tips:

Exercise—Indoors And Out

- Enjoy winter outdoor activities while you can! Hit the slopes for some skiing or snowboarding. Or become a kid again and build a snowman, go sledding or engage in a “friendly” snowball battle.

- Surf’s up! Put on your bathing suit and swim some laps in an indoor pool. It’s great exercise—and a good way to judge if you’ve added winter pounds.

Eating Tips

- Eat your veggies! Canned vegetable soup is an excellent way to get your vegetable servings during the winter. Or, add canned vegetables to other types of soup.

- Stock up so you don’t have to run to the store! Keep a well-stocked pantry that includes a variety of convenience items such as canned foods and popular pastas.

Creative Ways To Spend Winter Days

- Fire up the grill! Have a cookout indoors by cooking chicken kebabs and turkey burgers on an indoor grill. Open a can of baked beans and use a variety of canned fruit to make a healthy, taste-of-summer fruit salad. Make sure you eat from paper plates.

- Volunteer your time at a local agency. Spend an afternoon helping someone else—you’ll feel better for it.

Soup’s On—Pounds Aren’t

“Perhaps my favorite key to winter health and happiness is soup,” said Krieger. “Most people like to eat warm meals that stick to their ribs in the winter, and soup is just that. Plus, with so many canned-prepared versions of soup available, it is certainly a quick and easy meal to serve,” she continued.

According to Krieger, soup is also great for maintaining your weight. “When people eat soup they tend to feel content before they take in too many calories since soup is mostly liquid. That keeps the scales from tipping in the wrong direction,” she explained.

Following is a nutritious soup recipe to warm you from head to toe.

Spill-The-Beans Minestrone

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 cans (14½ ounces each) reduced-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 can (15½ ounces) reduced-sodium garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15¼ ounces) reduced-sodium red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14½ ounces) Italian-style stewed tomatoes
- 2 cups chopped kale or Swiss chard (optional)
- ½ cup uncooked small shell-shaped pasta
- ¼ teaspoon Italian seasoning



Pantry basics—canned beans, broth, tomatoes and dry pasta—are all you need to make this colorful, rich soup.

- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Preparation:

In medium saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat until hot. Cook and stir onion and garlic 3 to 5 minutes or until onion is translucent. Add broth, beans, tomatoes, kale (if desired), pasta and seasonings; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 to 12 minutes or until pasta is tender. Serve with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 6 (1½ cups)

Nutritional Information Per

Serving: 203 calories; 4 g fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 745 mg sodium; 37 g carbohydrate; 8 g fiber; 11 g protein.

For hundreds of canned food recipes or for more information on canned food, visit the Canned Food Alliance at www.mealtime.org.