

# Winter Wellness – Top 5 Tips



## Planning your Meals

Huddling in front of the fire or curled up on the couch under a blanket watching the television on a wet windy night is the perfect opportunity for planning healthy nutritious meals that not only satisfy but provide nutritional benefits. Websites to consider are:

[www.myfoodbag.co.nz](http://www.myfoodbag.co.nz)  
[www.healthyfood.co.nz](http://www.healthyfood.co.nz)

## How to heat your house

It's important for your family's health that your house is warm and dry. Cold and damp homes are linked to poor health, especially for babies and small children, people who are ill, and older people.

Only heat the room that you are in. Try and keep the temperature between 18 and 21 degrees especially if you have babies or people with illnesses living in your home

Dress warmly for bed and make sure your bedroom is warm enough

You can make your own draught 'snakes' by stuffing rugby socks or pantyhose with newspaper or cushion filling. 20% of heating can be lost through draughts.

Ministry of Social Development  
[www.msdc.govt.nz](http://www.msdc.govt.nz)

## 1. BOOST YOUR VITAMIN C

Vitamin C helps keep your immune system healthy and can help reduce the length and severity of a cold. However, it is no use swallowing endless vitamin C supplements when you have a cold - that really won't help. You need to have plenty of foods rich in vitamin C on a day to day basis to get the benefits, that way, if you do get a cold – hopefully it won't last as long! Lemons, oranges and feijoas are all in season right now and are packed with vitamin C. Add lemon juice to cold or hot water for a tasty drink or try feijoas with low fat yoghurt for a delicious snack.

## 2. GET OUTSIDE

When it is cold and wet, it can be very tempting to stay inside – but it is vital that you don't get caught in that trap, you need to get outside. You need to expose your skin to daylight to help your body to make Vitamin D which is important to keep your bones healthy, but also helps keep your immune system healthy. You also need to expose your eyes to daylight to help regulate your mood and sleep.

## 3. GO WHOLEGRAIN

Wherever you can, choose the wholegrain option – whether it is bread, crackers or breakfast cereal. Oats, brown rice, quinoa and buckwheat are other examples of whole grains which are delicious and so versatile. Wholegrains are packed with fibre which keeps things moving through your gut and they are also a great source of B vitamins which helps keep your energy up. Try adding them to soups for extra nutrition.

## 4. GET IN YOUR GREENS

We all know vegetables are good for us, but as the cold months kick in, it is a great time to enjoy some of the dark leafy greens! Spinach, kale and silverbeet are a few examples – they are a great source of vitamins and minerals to help keep your body in tip top shape through the colder months. BONUS – these greens are super easy to grow too so get into the garden!

## 5. MOVE IT

Colder, darker days can make the couch a very appealing place to be – but, keeping active will help you to maintain a healthy weight, keep your body working well and help you feel better so find a way to keep moving! Don't be afraid of the rain, get a good umbrella and coat – you can still enjoy a walk when there are a few rain drops. See what classes are running at your local leisure centre, try going for a swim – just find something that works for you that you can keep up with throughout the whole of autumn and winter.

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