

A photograph of a man and a woman walking in the rain. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The woman is wearing a yellow sweater and a red and black plaid jacket. The man is wearing a dark jacket and a plaid shirt. They are holding a large yellow umbrella. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a path.

BARMER

Health Advice

Put an end to the November blues

While we had an impressive 262 hours of sunshine in August, there are an average of just 53 hours to enjoy in November – which works out to less than two hours a day. No wonder we feel tired, find it harder to get out of bed in the morning, and the grey conditions outside can really put a damper on how we feel. Many people are only too familiar with the “November blues”: the lack of daylight encourages the release of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin, so we feel more tired than we do in the bright summer months. At the same time, our body releases less serotonin, which has a mood-enhancing effect. For many people, low moods pose a real problem. But don’t worry, we do have some good news: although we can’t change the grey November weather, we can still do something about what it does to our mood in our everyday working lives.

Bring more light into everyday life

Light has a major influence on our mood and performance. As sunshine can’t be relied on at this time of year, make sure that you have pleasant and bright lighting both at home and at work. Several small light sources in a room create a cosy atmosphere, but at in the workplace, the light sources should be as bright as possible – at least 500 lux.

Get out in the fresh air

A walk during your lunch break or after work in the cold drizzle might not sound especially tempting, but exercise in the fresh air is just what you need to energise your body and mind and boost your immune system at the same time. Use the few hours of daylight to go for a walk or a run, swim in the outdoor swimming pool or go cycling – do whatever you can best fit into your day.

Togetherness instead of loneliness

Now is the time to get together with other people, whether it's family members, friends or colleagues. Meet up during breaks or after work: whether it's sports, eating out, a concert or a games evening – it makes the grey winter days outside much easier to bear.

Go easy on yourself

Animals hibernate and plants retreat into the earth to reawaken with fresh energy in the spring. We humans also feel something of this natural cycle. Therefore, go easy on yourself if you're not bursting with energy in winter – it will all come back.

Top up on vitamin D

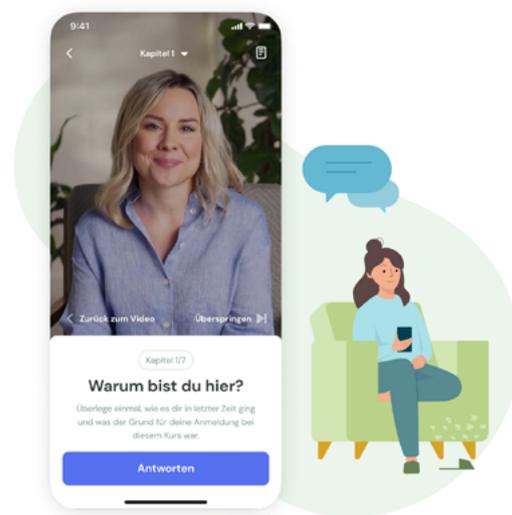
To ensure healthy bones and a properly functioning metabolism, our body needs vitamin D, which we mainly obtain from sunlight. As sunlight can be rare at this time of year, our bodies store up vitamin D for the winter over the summer months. Nevertheless, if the sun does decide to make an appearance in winter, be sure to go outside! Even if it's only for ten minutes. Make sure that the sun's rays reach your skin directly.

Spoil yourself

When the dark time of year makes you feel low, it's time to put yourself first for once: is there anything you can fit into your free time that would make you feel better? An evening at the cinema, perhaps, or a good book, a hot chocolate or a trip to the sauna? Be sure to spoil yourself lots with whatever takes your fancy. If you do, the winter won't seem quite as long and gloomy.

Eat and enjoy good food

Now is also the time for "soul food"! Try out new dishes with warming wintery ingredients such as ginger or chilli and add some colour to your cooking! For example, soups made with pumpkin or carrots. Many dishes are also great to take to work with you. And if you get a sweet tooth? Respond to it without feeling guilty. After all, Christmas gingerbread and cookies only come around once a year. Isn't the winter great?!



Recharge your batteries and reduce stress with the HelloBetter app:

Use interactive exercises, the online diary, personal coaching via chat if necessary and more. Free for one year for BARMER members.



Discover the HelloBetter app now:
www.barmer.de/hellobetter-app

Imprint

Editor

BARMER, Axel-Springer-Straße 44, 10969 Berlin

Editorial staff

Thorsten Noll
Employee Corporate Health Management
thorsten.noll@barmer.de

Print

Rudolf Glaudo GmbH & Co. KG
Lockfinke 75
42111 Wuppertal

Illustration

Getty Images: © skynesher

© BARMER 2024

All rights reserved. Reproduction, even in extracts, only with the prior written consent of BARMER. All information has been carefully compiled and checked. However, it is possible that content is no longer current. Please understand that we cannot assume any liability for the completeness or accuracy of the content. We are always grateful for suggestions and advice.