



# Things to Do

## To Cope With

### The Winter Blahs

#### ***Take a little trip***

You can often find great deals for winter getaways if you look in the right places. For instance, a trip to Florida from a budget airline offered in the darkest winter months can be quite affordable. Personally, I like to schedule a south-bound excursion at the beginning of March to give me something to look forward to most of the winter. Plus, I can return home to the emerging crocuses announcing the inevitable spring.

#### ***Embrace the season***

One of the best mood lifters is exercise. Find a winter sport or activity that you enjoy – like ice skating, cross country skiing, or even sledding – and you may even find yourself looking forward to snow and cold!

#### ***Hot baths***

Get in the habit of ending your day with a relaxing hot bath in the winter. Add some Epsom salts – which contain magnesium sulfate that is actually absorbed into your bloodstream through the skin – to promote relaxation of the muscles and reduce inflammation.

#### ***Spa day***

If you live in a cold place, where you have the heat on nearly constantly, the dry air can wreak havoc on your skin. A facial at a spa can be just the trick.

#### ***Fireplaces***

Fewer homes seem to have fireplaces these days, but if you're lucky enough to have one, put it to good use! Or find a friend with one and convince them to host a game night by the glow of the fire. Tell them you'll bring the chips and salsa!

#### ***Comfort foods***

Nothing gives succor on a cold winter day like a hearty meal with a starchy staple like mac-and-cheese or mashed potatoes! Hot chocolate can also do the trick, as chocolate has been proven to be a mood enhancer.

#### ***Sunshine***

There is much evidence to suggest that lack of sunlight is to blame for the winter blues. When we don't get sun, our bodies don't make enough Vitamin D. Experts suggest 15 minutes of sun on your face and hands 3 times a week to keep your Vitamin D levels up. So on sunny days, why not bundle up and take a brisk walk during your lunch hour? Your serotonin level will thank you!

#### ***Fresh flowers***

Having a piece of spring in the house will do wonders to perk up your mood. Find an affordable source for fresh flowers – farmer's markets and discount grocers are great places to look. Make it a habit to replace them weekly. That small weekly splurge can go a long way to keeping the beauty of warmer months in front of your mind's eye.

#### ***Superbowl parties***

Even if you don't like football, the parties can be pretty epic. Particularly fun if a team you really care about is involved, a Superbowl party can be the highlight of your mid-winter season!