



# WINTER MOOD FOOD

A GENTLE 3-DAY NUTRITION RESET  
TO SUPPORT LOW MOOD, ENERGY  
& EMOTIONAL STEADINESS

SIMPLE, COMFORTING MEALS  
USING EVERYDAY FOODS

# WINTER MOOD FOOD

## Welcome

Winter can be a challenging season for many people. Shorter days, colder weather, disrupted routines and reduced daylight all place extra demands on the body and nervous system. Feeling flatter in mood, more tired, or less motivated during winter is not a personal failing – it is a very human physiological response.

This short guide offers a gentle, food-first approach to supporting mood during the winter months. It focuses on warmth, regular nourishment and simple meals that are realistic to prepare when energy is low.

This is not a treatment plan or a weight-loss programme. It is intended as a supportive introduction to how nutrition – alongside sensory and lifestyle support – can help stabilise mood and energy in winter.

If low mood is persistent, severe, or affecting daily functioning, further professional support is always recommended.



# HOW NUTRITION SUPPORTS MOOD

Food influences mood in interconnected ways:



## 1. Blood sugar stability

Long gaps between meals or meals low in protein and fat can contribute to dips in energy, irritability and low mood. Regular, balanced meals help provide steadier energy to the brain.



## 2. Protein and neurotransmitters

Foods higher in protein provide amino acids, which are the building blocks for neurotransmitters involved in mood regulation. Our mind can achieve better balance when we eat enough protein.



## 3. Fats for brain health

The brain is rich in fat. Including sources of healthy fats, particularly omega-3 fats from oily fish, supports brain function and emotional regulation. It also helps us absorb fat-soluble vitamins and minerals.



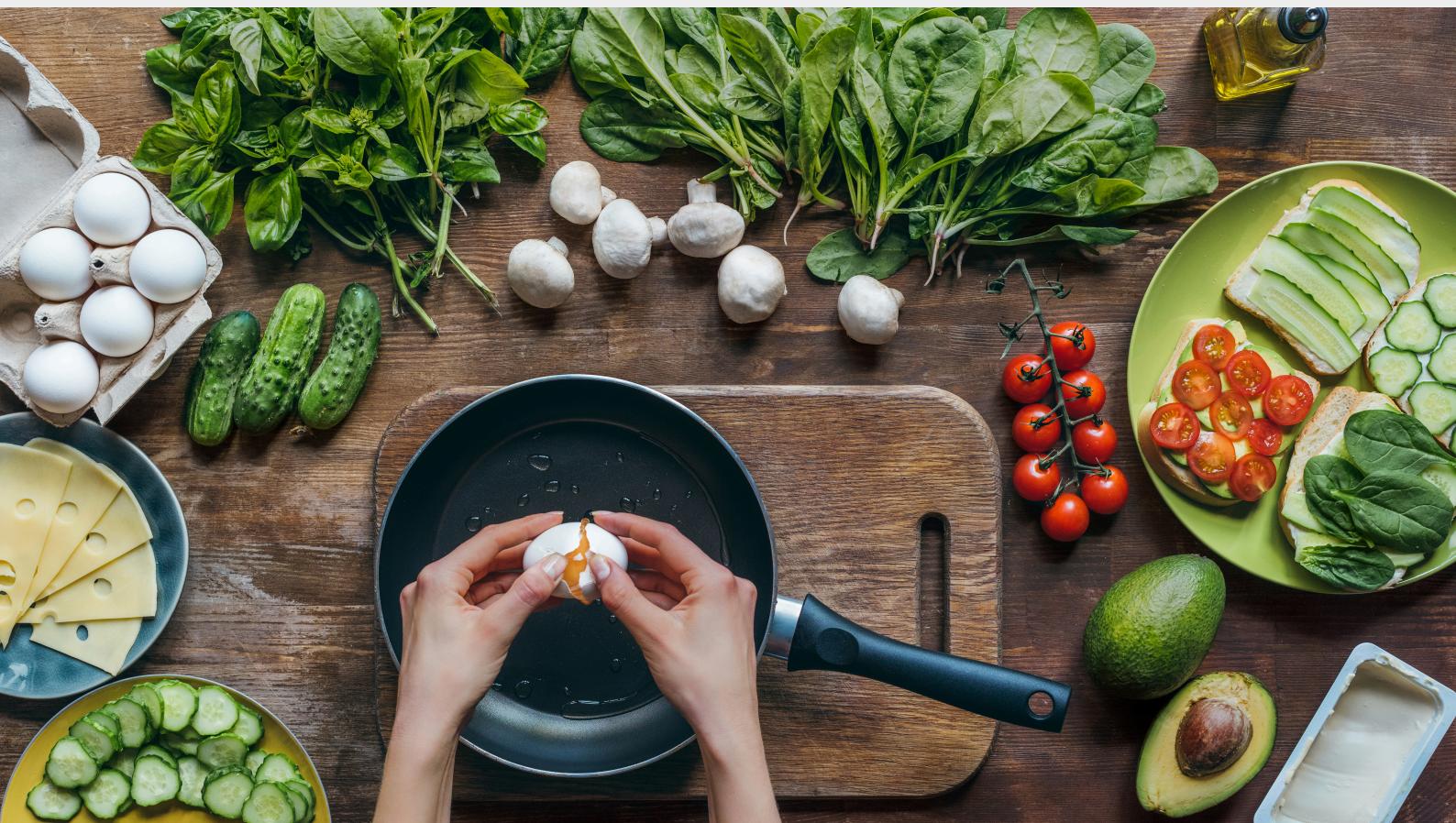
## 4. Micronutrients lower in winter

Levels of Vitamin D, iron, magnesium and B-vitamins commonly fall during winter and can influence energy, cognition and mood. It's recommended to eat Vitamin D enriched foods or take a supplement in winter.

So the aim of this guide is steady nourishment and warmth.



# HOW TO USE THIS 3-DAY PLAN



## How to use this guide

- Use the plan as written, or mix and match days
- Portion sizes can be adjusted to appetite
- Frozen, tinned and pre-prepared foods can be helpful
- Meals can be repeated – repetition is supportive in winter

This guide suits adults who:

- Feel lower in mood or energy during winter
- Want comforting, warming meals
- Prefer simple, familiar foods

This guide is not suitable as a sole intervention for diagnosed eating disorders or severe depression.

# Day 1: Grounding & Steady Energy

## Menu

### Breakfast

Warm porridge made with milk or fortified plant milk

Top with berries, chopped walnuts / seeds, and a sprinkle of cinnamon

### Lunch

Lentil and vegetable soup

Served with oatcakes or wholegrain bread

### Dinner

Baked salmon or mackerel

Mashed potatoes or root vegetables

Steamed greens (kale, cabbage or broccoli)

### Optional snack

Greek yoghurt with honey

OR apple slices with peanut butter

### Why this supports mood

Warm carbohydrates support steady blood sugar, oily fish provides omega-3 fats, and regular meals help reduce energy dips that can affect emotional regulation.



# Day 2: Comfort & Warmth

## Menu

### Breakfast

Scrambled eggs on wholegrain toast  
Optional grilled tomatoes or mushrooms

### Lunch

Leftover soup or stew  
OR baked potato with beans and grated cheese

### Dinner

Chicken and vegetable stew  
OR chickpea and vegetable stew (V)

### Optional snack

Handful of nuts  
OR banana with yoghurt

### Why this supports mood

Protein supports neurotransmitter production, while slow-cooked meals and warm foods provide physical and emotional comfort during colder days.



# Day 3: Nourish & Replenish

## Menu

### Breakfast

Natural yoghurt with seeds and stewed fruit

### Lunch

Soup, stew or leftovers from previous days

### Dinner

Simple traybake with:

- protein (salmon, sausages, tofu or chickpeas)
- mixed vegetables (carrots, onions, peppers, broccoli)
- olive oil and herbs

### Optional snack

Oatcakes with cheese  
OR pear with nut butter

### Why this supports mood

Colourful vegetables provide micronutrients, while familiar meals reduce decision fatigue and support consistency.



# Sensory Support to Complement Nutrition

Nutrition works best when combined with gentle sensory and nervous-system support.

## Aromatherapy

- Citrus oils (e.g. orange, bergamot) – uplifting and brightening
- Lavender – calming and supportive for sleep
- Frankincense – grounding during periods of overwhelm

Use via inhalation (tissue, diffuser) rather than topical application unless advised by a qualified practitioner.

## Other sensory supports

- Warm baths or foot soaks
- Soft lighting in the mornings and evenings
- Gentle movement such as walking or stretching
- Warm textures (scarves, blankets, hot drinks)

These inputs help regulate the nervous system and make nutritional changes easier to sustain.



# Winter Mood-Supporting Foods

## USEFUL TO KEEP IN YOUR PANTRY

- Oily fish (fresh or tinned)
- Eggs
- Lentils, beans, chickpeas
- Root vegetables
- Leafy greens
- Nuts and seeds
- Dairy or fortified alternatives
- Frozen fruit and vegetables



Keeping these foods available reduces reliance on ultra-processed options during low-energy periods.

## SHOPPING LIST FOR 3 DAY MENU

### Proteins

- Eggs
- Oily fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines)
- Chicken or plant-based alternatives
- Lentils, chickpeas, beans



### Carbohydrates

- Porridge oats
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Wholegrain bread or oatcakes



### Fruits & Vegetables

- Root vegetables (carrots, parsnips, onions)
- Leafy greens (kale, cabbage, spinach)
- Frozen berries
- Apples and pears



### Fats & Extras

- Olive oil
- Nuts and seeds
- Cinnamon, ginger, herbs
- Milk or fortified plant milk



# Creating Lasting Habits



## When Food Alone May Not Be Enough

Nutrition is one part of a wider picture.

Additional support may be helpful if you experience:

- Persistent low mood
- Significant anxiety
- Sleep disruption
- Hormonal changes (perimenopause or menopause)
- High stress or burnout

Support may include nutrition consultations, complementary therapies, GP support or psychological therapies. Combining approaches is often effective.

## About North East Clinical

This guide was created by a qualified educator and therapist offering:

- Nutritional support
- Aromatherapy
- Acupuncture
- Skin health and integrative care

If you would like personalised support, you are welcome to explore further support on our clinic website - [www.northeastclinical.co.uk](http://www.northeastclinical.co.uk)

## References

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