

HEALTH Matters

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Lifestyle

Cracking-up in Winter

With winter on its way out, most of us might have experienced dry, flaky and chapped skin.

Continuous exposure to cold windy weather steals the skin of its moisture resulting in dryness. Even covered skin is affected by the friction caused by warm clothing and low humidity.



It is commonly identified by the skin feeling tight, stretched or dull, slightly red and rough. As tempting as the winter sun is, if you plan to spend a lot of time outdoors, watch out for windburn and snow burn in snowy regions.

Keep Dryness at Bay

It's usually the lips, nose, cheeks, hands, arms, lower legs and thighs that get neglected during winter. The skin on your face is the most delicate and thinnest; it needs extra protection. Lips produce very little or no oil; prone to cracking and chapping.

Here are some precautionary tips:

Use oil-based moisturisers frequently: Oil stays on the skin longer and retains the skin's moisture.

Step-out with protection: Use sunscreens and gloves to protect hands.

Wear skin-friendly fabrics: Wear clothes made of natural fibres like cotton and silk so your skin breathes easily.

Layer clothes: It facilitates ease of removing and adding clothes according to the temperature.

Use a humidifier: It increases the moisture content and combats the dry air that worsens skin itching and flaking.



Daily care

- **Take shorter baths** with warm and not hot water as it strips the skin from natural hydrating oils.
- **Bathe with milder, gentler soaps** with additional oils, fats, and moisturiser content.
- **Pat the skin dry** after bathing as rubbing could irritate the skin.
- **Moisturise while still damp** to help the skin absorb the moisturiser better.

- **Keep deodorants, anti-bacterial soaps and fragrances** for warmer weather when they are less likely to irritate the skin.

Be it a thick winter coat or a light cardigan, with an extra coat of moisturiser and a hot cup of tea you can win over winter!

Greetings!

With winter spreading its cold waves all around and thick blankets being brought out of the closet, little or no care is given to the natural covering of the body. The article 'Cracking-up in Winter' highlights the importance of skin care during this season.

Cold air, one of the triggering factors of asthma, frightens you of winter, making you breathe harder and faster. You would be glad to 'Breathe a Sigh of Relief' with some common breathing exercises.

Is the winter sunlight making you SAD? Don't be! Try some useful tips to cheer up your mood 'When Season's the Reason for your Woes'.

'Blood Donation' is the noblest deed of humanity. We hope the information on the need, eligibility and common myths of blood donation will encourage you to indulge in this charity.

We value your continued patronage. Please send your feedback and suggestions to editorial@ttkhealthcareservices.com.



BREATHING

a Sigh of Relief



What's the big deal about breathing? This seemingly insignificant act can be the most difficult part of one's life. A WHO survey in 2011 showed that 235 million people suffer from asthma worldwide and the number continues to rise.

Marked by bouts of breathlessness and wheezing, this chronic breathing disorder can debilitate and make life miserable. Yet, asthma need not literally take one's breath away. Holding out hope against what is often termed a silent killer, many experts feel doing breathing exercises is the best way to cope with the problem, minimize medicine-dependency and lead a better life.

Help at Hand

People who are prone to asthma are often seen carrying inhalers as a precautionary measure against attacks. These saviour puffs open up constricted airways and assist in breathing. But experts believe that patients would be better equipped to handle contingencies if they practised breathing exercises even while on medication.



Breathing techniques help patients gain control and also check for dysfunctionality caused by deep or quick breaths that lead to fatigue and hyperventilation. These techniques involve relaxing and reducing stress on lungs.

With little or no control over external triggers such as dust, smoke, cold air or pollen, proper breathing techniques, can be the key to induce strength in a patient to fight back their ill-effects. Some of these methods are:

- Taking fewer and slower breaths instead of hyperventilating
- Breathing through the nose rather than the mouth
- Using abdominal muscles to take deep belly breaths



Beating the Blues with Buteyko

The Buteyko breathing technique is all about developing the habit of breathing less.

Focusing on breathing through the nose rather than the mouth brings down asthma symptoms by lowering hyperventilation. It also:

- Encourages breath-holding known as control and extended pauses
- Emphasises on self-monitoring using pulse rate and pauses as the objective measures of outcome (longer pauses means better breathing control)

The practise is based on the Buteyko theory that many modern chronic health conditions are a result of the body's physiological response to dysfunctional breathing. It asserts that many symptoms and disorders can be managed by primarily addressing hyperventilation and factors that trigger it.

Papworth Poise

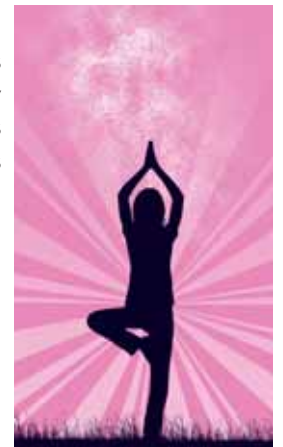
Papworth technique, developed at the Papworth Hospital in Cambridgeshire during the 1960s, involves deep belly (diaphragmatic) and nose breathing. The approach is a blend of relaxation and breathing techniques, and helps you deal with emotional triggers such as depression and anxiety.

Papworth controls over-breathing or rapid shallow breaths taken at the top of the chest, mainly associated with people who are stressed. Though not entirely divorced from the Buteyko method, it does not include breath-holding or hypoventilation that are integral to the latter. The Papworth method focuses on using the abdomen and diaphragm rather than the chest. A random controlled trial has shown that it can bring down symptoms in patients with mild asthma by a third.

Pranayama

Pranayama or yoga breathing teaches one to take deep, slow and steady breaths. This form of exercise increases fitness and reduces stress. The objectives of Pranayama are as follows:

- Reduce breathing frequency
- Attain 1:2 ratio duration of inspiration and expiration
- Make breath-holding at the end of inspiration twice the length of expiration
- Increase mental concentration on breathing



Look Before You Leap

The jury is still out on the use of breathing exercises to combat asthma attacks, yet researchers are upbeat about the indirect impact that brings about relaxation. With stress considered to be a major trigger of the disorder, methods to soothe the body, mind and soul are positive steps in the right direction. As a word of caution from practitioners of the above mentioned techniques, it is always advisable to consult one's doctor before embarking on such a regime and to also practise the same under the guidance of a trained personnel.



WHEN SEASON'S THE REASON FOR YOUR WOES

It's that time of the year when festivities peak and the world appears to be steeped in fun and frolic. Though this might be the norm in most cases it may not be everybody's story. Tagging along with winter is the Seasonal Affective Disorder, a form of depression that visits individuals year after year. Interestingly acronym-ed SAD, this psychological phenomenon, however, need not make one sad as there reportedly are ways to recognize and treat it before cure goes out of season.

As SAD as can be

SAD is a kind of depression that occurs around the same time every year. More often than not, it shows up in winter and lasts throughout the season, getting the name Winter SAD. However, in rare cases, the disease blooms in spring or early summer and is then referred to as Summer SAD. It makes one lethargic and moody, to say the least.

SAD is caused by a biochemical imbalance resulting from the lack of sunlight. Unlike many ailments that plague the human body without rhyme or reason, SAD has a fixed time-frame. By taking precautionary measures, following consultations with the doctor well in advance, one can hopefully tame this seasonal menace.

Though SAD has been reported more among women than in men, symptoms in the latter are known to be more severe. Psychologists and counselors suggest keeping tabs on children as they too can fall prey to this seasonal wrath.

Signs and Sighs

As the baneful seasons mature, the symptoms of SAD also begin to bloom in full before they decline only to re-emerge a year later.

Some Overt Signs of Winter SAD:

- Tiredness
- Oversleeping
- Craving for sugary food
- Feelings of sadness, guilt and loss of self-esteem
- Irritability
- Avoiding social and physical contact



Some Symptoms of Summer SAD:

- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Poor appetite



Know the Triggers

Psychiatrists have reportedly failed to put a finger on the specific causes of SAD, but existing mental health conditions, genetics, age and the individual's body chemical makeup are believed to play a role in setting it off.



Biological Clock: Reduced levels of sunlight during fall and winter may disrupt the body clock that lets you know when to sleep or wake up. This breakdown of the biological clock or Circadian Rhythm could lead to depression.

Serotonin: Scanty sunlight can cause a drop in Serotonin — a brain chemical that affects mood and whose low levels could trigger depression.

Melatonin Hormone: Seasonal changes can cause an imbalance of Melatonin that plays a role in sleep patterns and mood.

Managing SAD

Timely intervention can help treat the condition and prevent complications.



Anti-depressant Medication: It is to be taken strictly under medical supervision. Though reportedly used for treating SAD, it is said to be effective only as long as it is taken. Once stopped, the symptoms could return. Therefore, experts recommend psycho-social approaches for long-term results.

Phototherapy: Along with psychotherapy and medications, phototherapy or light therapy using a special lamp to simulate sunrays is effective. Psychiatrists say the treatment should start during early winter to check SAD before it hits.

Catch Life's Brighter Side:

Involvement in group activities and talking to people who are caring and positive has a calming effect. Opening windows to let the sun in also gets one to soak in a lot of the golden glow that helps keep many SAD side-effects at bay.

Here are some more ways to cope with SAD at home:

- 1 Sleep well
- 2 Eat healthy
- 3 Take medicines, on time and in correct doses
- 4 Exercise
- 5 Keep away from substance abuse

If winter comes, can spring be far behind? Just as seasons come and go, SAD too, thankfully, isn't here to stay. *stay.*





Blood donation is a process in which a person, referred to as a donor, voluntarily agrees for blood to be drawn with the intention of donating it. It is a noble gift of life as the donated blood is used for transfusions, saving many lives without costing the donor even a single penny.

The Need for Blood

People need blood in case of:

- Severe injuries due to accidents, natural calamities, etc.
- Surgeries with major blood loss
- Organ transplants
- Medical conditions like anaemia, cancer, bleeding disorders
- Serious illnesses, liver failure and severe burns

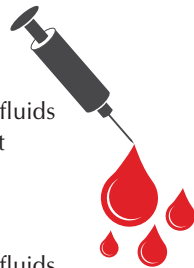
THE ELIGIBILITY FOR BLOOD DONATION

Can Donate	Cannot Donate
≥ 16 years (no upper age limit)	Symptoms of cold, flu or any active infections
≥ 50 kg	HIV, Hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases
Good health (includes keeping chronic diseases like diabetes under control)	Anaemia, uncontrolled diabetes, heart diseases, cancer
	Organ failure (liver, kidney or lung)

PRECAUTIONS

Before donating blood:

- Drink adequate amount of non-alcoholic fluids
- Eat a healthy meal, avoid foods high in fat
- Maintain a healthy iron level in your diet



After donating blood:

- Drink adequate amount of non-alcoholic fluids
- If bleeding restarts, raise your arm up and press needle site till bleeding stops
- Do not perform heavy exercises like lifting
- In case of dizziness or weakness; avoid driving - it could put others at risk, lie down, raise your feet till the feeling passes
- Eat nutritious food rich in iron and proteins to quickly replace the lost blood

MYTHS OF BLOOD DONATION

- Myth:** Blood donation will make me feel weak
Fact: No. Blood drawn during one visit (350-450 ml) is less than 1/10th of storage. However, some may feel dizzy for a few hours following donation, but it can be taken care of by adequate rest.
- Myth:** I cannot donate blood frequently
Fact: No. You can donate blood once every 56 days. The body requires around 4-6 weeks to replenish the lost blood completely.
- Myth:** An entire day is lost in the process of blood donation
Fact: No. Blood collection requires around 10-15 minutes. The entire donation process requires 1-1.5 hrs. You can resume work after donation, but follow the precautions mentioned earlier.
- Myth:** Blood donation increases the risk of HIV and other infections
Fact: No. Blood donation is absolutely safe due to the sterile procedures. You cannot get HIV or any other infectious diseases.



Quiz Bowl

Answer the questions based on the newsletter you just read

- 1) Which cream or lotion is applied on the skin to prevent dryness?
 I R E
- 2) What is the rapid and deep breathing, usually seen in asthma patients, called?
 Y R V T A N
- 3) Name the brain chemical whose low levels could trigger depression.
 S T I
- 4) Name the condition that requires blood transfusion because of uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells in the body.
 N E

E-mail your answers to : editorial@ttkhealthcareservices.com