

# Singing The Blues? Take Some Of These Mood-Elevating Steps

For the eight million Americans who are severely afflicted with depression, therapy and medication may be the best route. But for those of us who hit an occasional downdraft of mild or moderate depression, there are a number of self-help remedies that can give a substantial boost.

Joan Heilman, writing in the December Reader's Digest, outlines mood-elevating steps that you can take

yourself--"uppers," in effect, without the drugs.

**Exercise.** The very fact that you're taking action instead of just sitting there helps, but exercise actually changes the level of hormones in the blood.

**Nutrition.** Some authorities believe that even a single nutritional deficiency can cause depression in susceptible people. Vitamin therapy, when taken in accordance with a physician's instructions, is harmless and can quickly

have an effect.

**Think Positive.** Depressed people view life darkly. Be aware that your dark feelings originate in your head and may not jibe with reality. Work on converting your negative thoughts into more realistic alternatives.

**Socialize.** The very fact that you feel isolated and lonely is an early-warning signal of oncoming depression. Make a point of seeing friends and keep in touch with

associates.

**Check Your Medications.** Many prescription drugs, Heilman warns, can cause depression as a side effect. Check with your doctor if you're taking medication.

If you frequently feel down in the dumps, your doctor or a mental-health professional can help you. Depression can be successfully treated.



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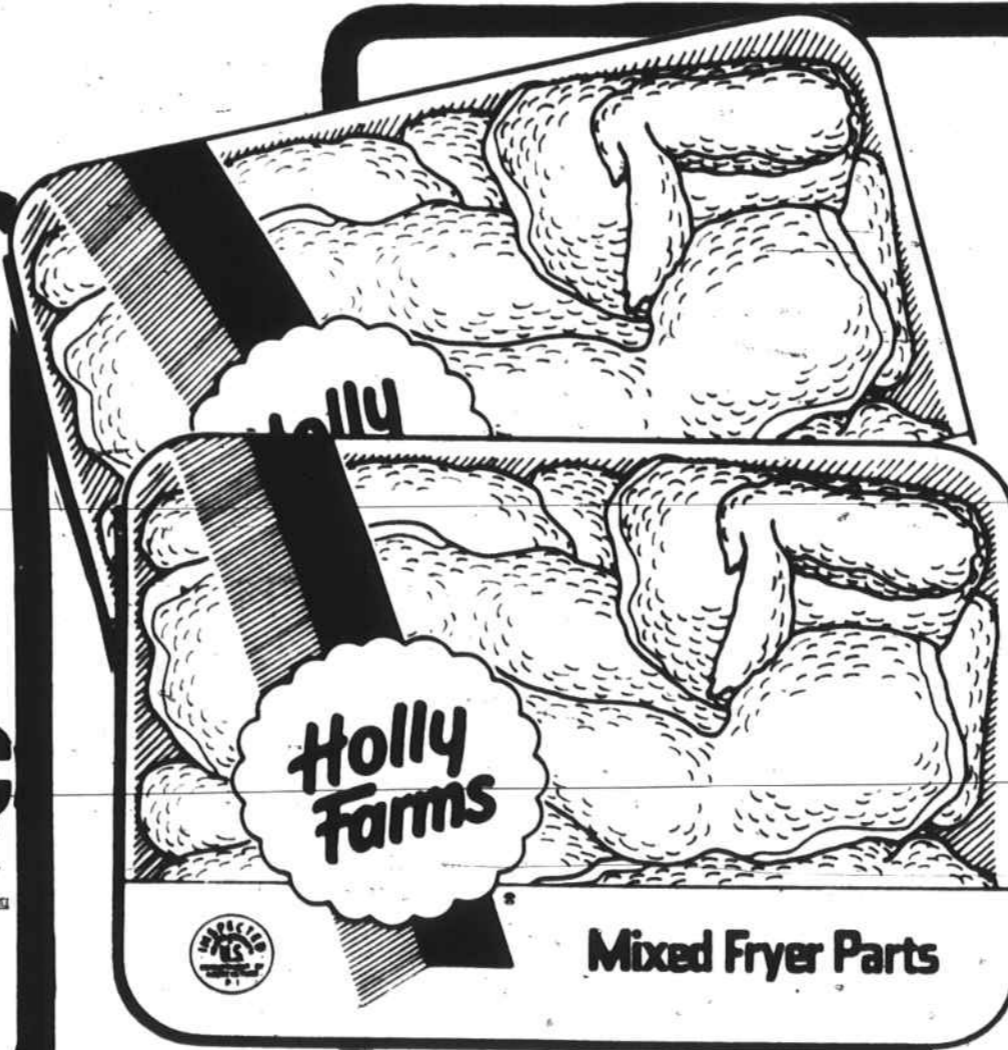
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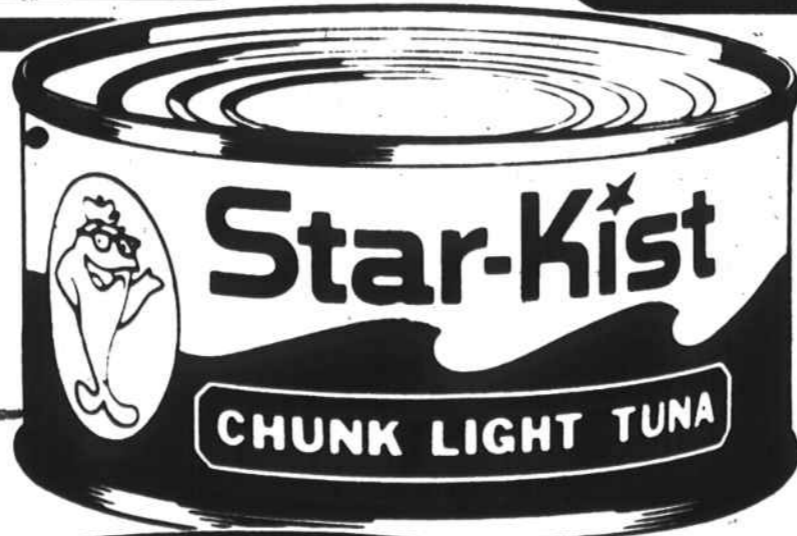
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