

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH

Seasonal Affective Disorder is a form of depression that typically arises at a specific time of year, usually during the fall and winter when daylight hours are shorter.

While it shares many symptoms with major depressive disorder, SAD is distinct because its onset and course are linked to seasonal changes. In some cases, individuals may also experience SAD during the spring and summer months, though this is less common.



SEASONAL DEPRESSION
What you should know about Seasonal Affective Disorder before this winter season.

WHAT IS SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)?
SAD is a type of depressive disorder related to changes in seasons. SAD, a.k.a. seasonal depression, usually arises in and lasts throughout the fall and winter months.

10 MILLION Americans are estimated to experience SAD in a given year

Individuals in this age group are more likely to develop SAD. **20-30 YEARS OLD**

FIND LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS THIS WINTER
Concerned about your SAD symptoms? Here's what to do
If you are feeling symptoms of SAD, reach out to your health provider about treatments. They may recommend light therapy (which can be done at home in some cases), talk therapy, or medication. If you think you may have experienced SAD in the past, your provider may be able to treat it before symptoms begin. If you have thoughts of suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-237-8255 or call 911.

MORE THAN JUST THE WINTER BLUES
Symptoms of SAD include:

- Feelings of Depression (hopelessness, loss of self-esteem, sudden lack of interest in activities, guilt, misery, despair, and apathy.)
- Having low energy
- Changes in sleep patterns, usually oversleeping.
- Experiencing changes in appetite or weight, specifically craving foods high in carbohydrates.
- Feeling fatigued or unable to carry out usual activities.
- Suicidal thoughts.

Sources: Mental Health America, The Mayo Clinic, The Cleveland Clinic, & The National Institute of Mental Health

While you may not be able to completely prevent Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), there are several strategies to help reduce its impact and manage symptoms effectively:

Maximize Daylight

- Spend 30 minutes outdoors each day.
- Use bright, full-spectrum light bulbs indoors.

Stay Active

- Exercise regularly, and try outdoor activities.

Healthy Diet

- Eat a balanced diet and limit carbs.

Maintain Routine

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule and stay engaged in activities.

Manage Stress

- Practice stress-reduction techniques and seek support if needed.

Professional Help

- Consider therapy or talk to your doctor for personalized advice.

