

Thriving During SAD Season



If winter's short days and overcast skies get you down, it may be seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

The American Psychiatric Association estimates that 1 in 20 American adults experience this winter-based depression. **Here's how to make it to brighter days.**

Recognize the Signs

SAD can affect you for up to five months each year.

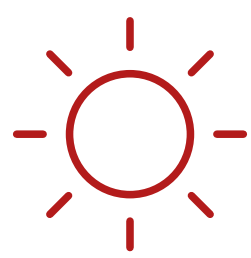
Common symptoms include:

- Depressed mood
- Increased fatigue
- More frequent negative thinking
- Reduced desire to socialize
- Sleeping more or less than usual



Be Empowered

If you feel the effects of SAD, take action to reduce its symptoms.



Go outside.

A lack of vitamin D may worsen SAD symptoms. Get in the sun when possible.



See friends.

Stay involved with your regular activities and maintain social connections.



Sleep well.

Establish healthy sleep habits to help you fall asleep and stay asleep.



Think positively.

Challenge negative thoughts. Consider keeping a gratitude journal.

Build a Support System

Sometimes, a little help can go a long way.

- **Counseling.** Cognitive-behavioral therapy helps you learn healthy thinking and behavioral patterns.
- **Light therapy.** Spending 30 minutes each day in front of a special light source can reduce the effects of SAD.
- **Supplements.** Getting vitamin D can be tricky in the winter months. Supplements may help, but talk with your doctor first.



**Ready to care for your mental health?
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