



Season Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that typically begins in the fall and can last throughout the winter.

What may it look or feel like?

- ❖ Feeling depressed for majority of the day, almost daily
- ❖ Lacking enjoyment in typically preferred activities
- ❖ Experiencing decreased energy levels
- ❖ Difficulty sleeping (mostly sleeping too much in the winter or insomnia in the summer)
- ❖ Changes in appetite (increased desire for carbohydrates in the winter, loss of desire in summer)
- ❖ Feeling easily irritated or distracted
- ❖ Hopelessness, worthlessness or guilt
- ❖ Thoughts of suicide or death

Why might this be happening to me?

Although the cause of SAD remains unknown, here are some potential sources:

- ❖ Your circadian rhythm may be out of balance
- ❖ Your serotonin levels might have dropped
- ❖ Your melatonin levels may have changed

What could put me at risk for SAD?

It has been researched that SAD is experienced more often in women than men and in younger vs older adults.

- ❖ It's possible your family has a history of SAD
- ❖ Do you already have a diagnosis of depression that worsens in the winter?
- ❖ SAD is more common in areas furthest from the equator

What can I do if I feel this way?

- ❖ Talk to your health care professional who may suggest a medication or supplement (vitamin D)
- ❖ Consider light therapy which mimics natural outdoor light
- ❖ Contemplate private counseling to look at possible negative thought patterns or discuss coping strategies/self care
- ❖ Think about alternative therapies such as reiki, massage, osteopathy or BIE