

SAD- Seasonal Affective Disorder

Seasonal Affective Disorder is a type of depression related to the change in seasons. It begins and ends around the same time every year- usually starting in the fall and continuing through the winter months. It is a type of Major Depression.*

Symptoms of SAD-

Irritability, being tired or having low energy, problems getting along with others, heavy or “leaden” feeling in arms and legs, oversleeping, appetite changes, especially cravings for foods high in carbohydrates, weight gain, losing interest in things that used to bring pleasure, thoughts of death or suicide.

It’s normal for all of us to have a day like this every now and again, but if these feelings or changes occur for days at a time, you can’t get motivated, feel helpless or hopeless, or you find yourself turning to alcohol for comfort, it’s time to call your doctor.

Causes of SAD-

Your biological clock (also called Circadian Rhythm) – decreased levels of sunlight may disrupt your internal clock causing depression. Serotonin levels, which affects our moods, decrease with decreased sunlight.

Decreased Serotonin levels- Decreased levels affect our mood. As amount of sunlight received goes down, so do the levels of Serotonin.

Complications of SAD-

Suicidal thoughts and behaviors, social withdrawal, problems with school, work or relationships, substance abuse.

If any of this sounds or feels familiar, contact your doctor. SAD is easily treated with medication, light therapy and/or counseling. There is no need to suffer. If you are feeling as though you would be better off dead, entertaining thoughts of harming yourself, or just not wanting to “be” anymore, please contact your local crisis line and reach out to a family member or friend.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD). (n.d.). Retrieved November 2016, from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder/basics/definition/CON-20021047>

