

How to Deal with Seasonal Depression

Seasonal Depression, or Seasonal Affective Disorder is a form of depression that can appear during the fall and winter months.

Seasonal Depression can affect people of all ages, with most cases experiencing onset between the ages of 18 and 30.

Symptoms of seasonal depression are usually mild to moderate but they CAN become more severe. Unlike Major Depressive Disorder, seasonal depression symptoms tend to go into remission throughout the spring and summer. This is associated with getting less exposure to sunlight during the day (when the time changes).

Since it's that time of year again, it is important to be aware of possible symptoms associated with seasonal depression:

- Fatigue
- Lack of interest in normal activities
- Social withdrawal
- Changes in appetite
- Weight gain
- Irritability
- Low energy
- Hypersensitivity to rejection
- Oversleeping
- Feelings of depression



There are many treatment options to manage seasonal depression, many of which you can do yourself, without medical attention.

- Take walks during the day to increase your sunlight exposure. Being outside during the day helps you feel energized.
- Let in as much sunlight as possible into your bedroom in the morning when you wake up.
- Don't give in to cravings for heavy carbohydrates. Carbs increase your likelihood for seasonal depression.
- Eat proteins and B-vitamins (such as those found in dark leafy green vegetables) as dietary adjustments.
- Remain active and increase endorphins in your blood stream, even when the weather may not be motivational.
- If you do not enjoy exercising, consider dancing in your room, or trying yoga.
- Always remember the importance of socializing. Increasing socialization can make you feel more connected and appreciated.

Seasonal depression is sometimes confused with other, more serious conditions. If you are unsure, visit your doctor. Taking care of yourself is an ongoing process that demands priority!