

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER



Feeling SAD? Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is characterized by the onset of depression during the winter months, when there is less natural sunlight. The depression generally lifts during spring and summer.

Some of the symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder are:

- Oversleeping
- Fatigue
- Sadness, moodiness, or irritability
- Overeating, especially carbohydrate cravings late in the day
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Desire to “hibernate” until spring

Individuals with SAD appear to be sensitive to the lack of sunlight in the winter months. SAD is most common in parts of the world farthest from the equator, where winters have very short days. Some studies show that as many as 25% of people suffer some degree of mood shift with the seasons, and for 15% the changes can be quite severe.

The good news is that SAD can be treated quite effectively. For many people, “full-spectrum” lights providing artificial sunlight seem to relieve the symptoms, while for others medication may be more helpful. If you think that you may be suffering from SAD, please feel free to call your EAP for help in determining whether you might benefit from one of these approaches.

Employee Assistance Program
1.800.451.1834

ALLONESM
HEALTH