

Red & White Walk-Arounds: Cardio & Vitamin D Drops for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



Vitamin D & SAD

Vitamin D is known as the “sunshine” vitamin and for good reason – it’s the sun’s UVB rays that naturally produce Vitamin D. Vitamin D levels can become depleted without enough sunshine. Many recent studies are finding strong correlations between Vitamin D and depression and that the lower the Vitamin D levels, the greater chance there is of suffering from depression, including SAD.

Vitamin D can be found naturally in salmon, whole eggs and milk but to ensure you are getting enough Vitamin D in the winter months, consider adding Vitamin D drops to juice or your food. Dosage for adults should be minimum 600IU/day but not more than 4000IU/day.



Sources: www.webmd.com, www.drweil.com, www.dieticians.ca

What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)?

Exposure to light naturally increases the feel-good chemicals in our brains and bodies, such as serotonin. When the days get shorter in the fall/winter and we spend less time in the daylight, we are setting ourselves up, physiologically, for getting the “winter blues”.

Symptoms are typical of depression and include fatigue, loss of interest in normal activities, cravings for carbohydrate foods (hence the term “comfort” foods that tend to be heavy and served in the fall & winter), weight gain and social withdrawal.

Cardio Activity & SAD

Depression symptoms often improve with exercise. Research on mental health disorders like anxiety & depression shows that the psychological and physical benefits of exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood.

Exercise helps to improve mood by:

- Releasing feel-good brain chemicals that may ease depression (neurotransmitters and endorphins)
- Reducing immune system chemicals that can worsen depression.
- Increasing body temperature, which may have calming effects.

You don’t need to invest in a gym membership or buy fancy equipment to access these benefits. A brisk walk outdoors is a fantastic way to boost your endorphins while allowing the sun to help your body produce serotonin and melatonin, two important mood-regulating hormones.

Try and get outside and get your heart pumping for 30 minutes every day! If you are just getting started and think that sounds like a lot, try breaking it into 10 minute chunks throughout the day.