



Getting Through the Dark Months

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Overview

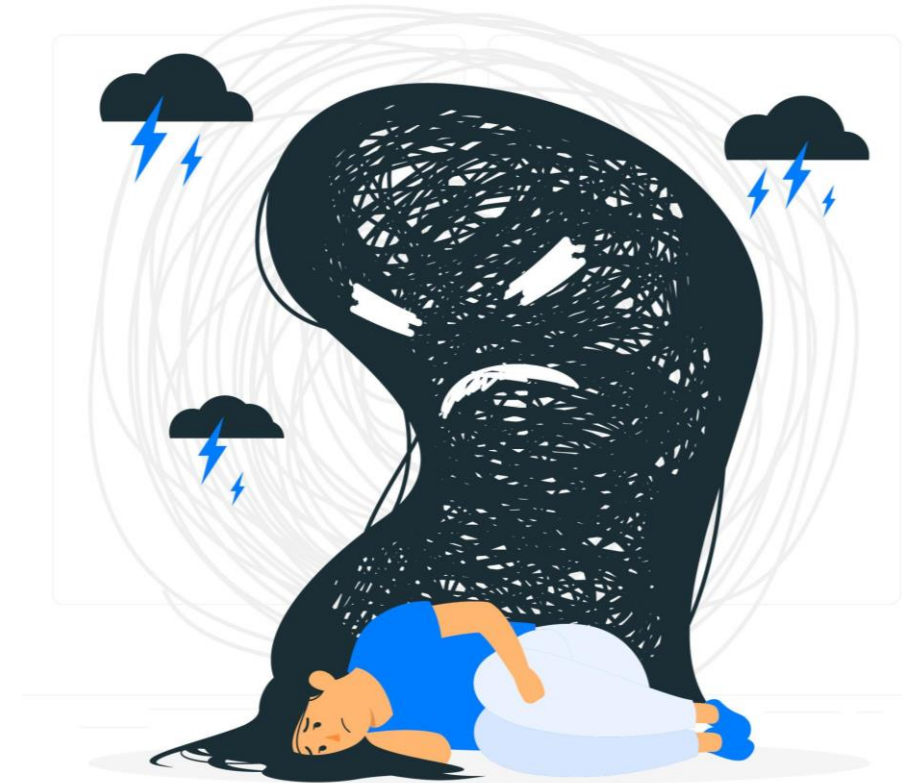
- An introduction to SAD
- Symptoms and causes
- Risk factors
- Treating SAD
- Other ways to help with SAD



What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

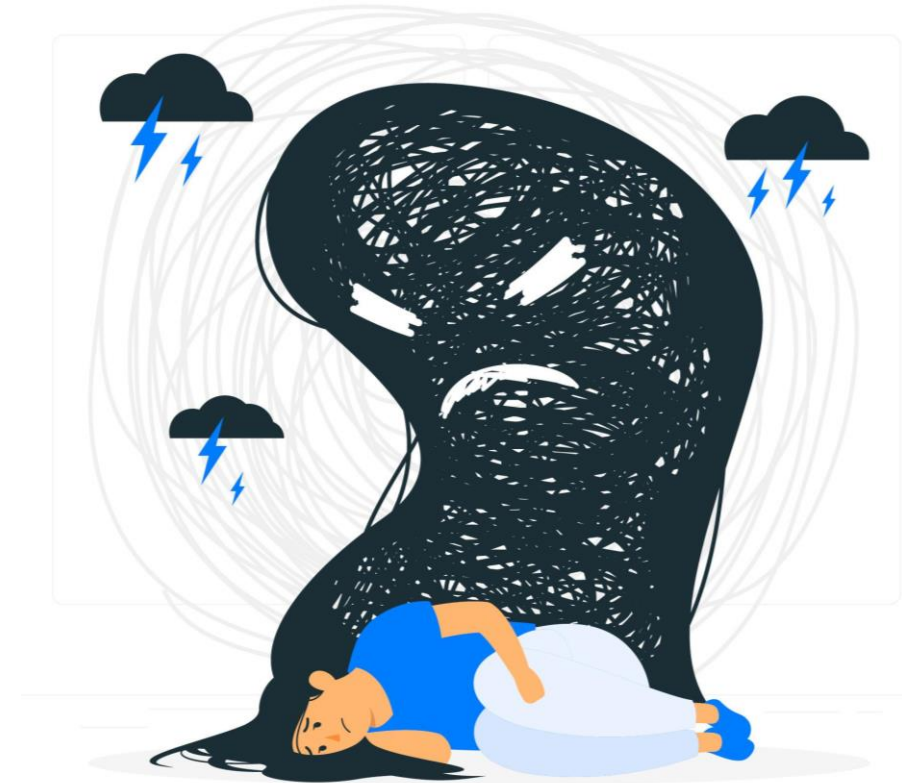
- A condition related to the **shortening of daylight hours**
- A mild to moderate form of **depression** that occurs during the fall and winter months
- Key feature: it's **cyclical**. It appears each year as the seasons change and disappears during spring and summer

It's not the same as the “winter blues”!



The symptoms of SAD

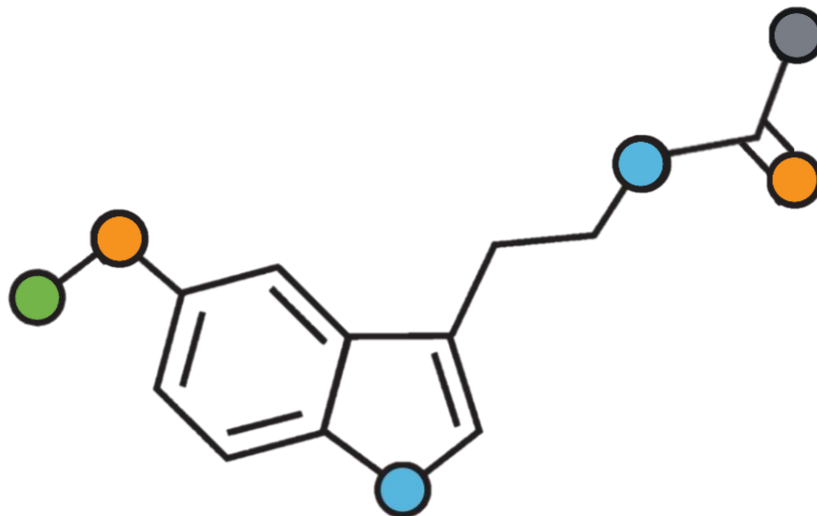
- Incorrectly blaming yourself
- Difficulty doing easy or enjoyable activities
- Difficulty thinking and concentrating
- Feeling more lethargic
- Difficulty getting up when days are shorter
- Oversleeping
- Craving carb-heavy foods



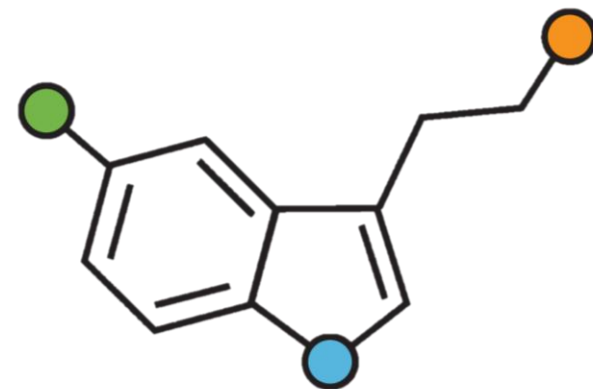
Three main contributors



Circadian
Rhythm



Melatonin



Serotonin

Are you at risk?

- Women more than men
- Over 20 years of age
- Immediate family members have been affected
- Live in the northern latitudes



Treating SAD

- Light therapy
- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Medication
- The Optimal Wellness Effect
 - Practicing Self-Care
 - Building Resiliency
 - Finding Happiness

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommends that SAD should be treated in the same way as other types of depression.

Treating SAD with light therapy

- Uses a **light box** that is much brighter than indoor lighting
- Increases **serotonin**, decreases **melatonin**
- Effective for **70%** of participants after a few weeks¹
- Long-term benefits unclear
- Commercially available
- Compliance and consistency is crucial!



¹National Institute of Health, 2013

Treating SAD with CBT

- Cognitive behavioural therapy is based on the idea that the way we **think** and **act** may affect the way we **feel**
- Therapist fosters **behavioural skills** (identify, schedule, doing enjoyable things), and **cognitive skills** (identify and challenge negative thoughts)
- Should counteract the lethargic moods and “hibernation” tendencies



Treating SAD with medication

- When severe, SAD can be treated with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Increases serotonin, which lifts mood
- MUST be taken as prescribed and even when you begin to feel better



Treating SAD with a healthy diet



Great Choices
Reduce SAD symptoms

Treating SAD with a healthy diet



Eating
whenever I have
time as long as
it's healthy



Avoiding all
carbs to keep
my glucose
levels down

Not So Great Choices
Increase SAD symptoms

"At last, a book about how to achieve hormonal health that looks at the big picture. This book is a treasure."
Dr. Christiane Northrup,
author of *The Wisdom of Menopause*

#1
NATIONAL
BESTSELLER

THE HORMONE DIET

Lose Fat. Gain Strength.
Live Younger Longer.



DR. NATASHA TURNER
NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR

Working from home/remote

- Isolation
- Lack of social connection
- Working too many hours
- What are your boundaries?
- Is your work set-up well lit with natural light?



Prioritize Your Health Mindful Movement



No Movement = Sloth-mode


OXYGEN

do more
of what
makes you
happy ❤️

Take 5, Then Decide

- ✓ Something is better than nothing.
- ✓ Choose movements that offer maximum benefits (try a microburst).
- ✓ Hectic is NOT aerobic.
- ✓ Exercise is NOT a chore.

“It’s deciding that the longevity of your body and mind are important enough.”

Habit Stacking



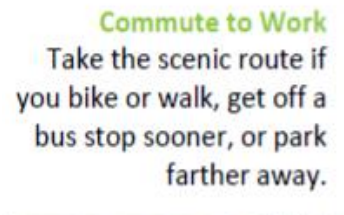
Morning Coffee

Take some deep breaths and stretch between sips.



Morning Routine

Work in some body-conditioning with squats, lunges, and heel raises as you brush.



Commute to Work

Take the scenic route if you bike or walk, get off a bus stop sooner, or park farther away.



Social Media Check

March on the spot as you catch up on posts.



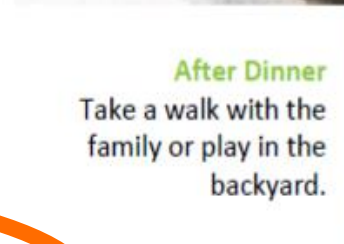
Afternoon Slump

Re-energize your body with a 10-minute microburst.



Dinner Prep

Make dinner prep fun by dancing as you cook.



After Dinner

Take a walk with the family or play in the backyard.



Before Bed

Wrap up the day with 10 minutes of yoga.



THANK YOU!

Reach out at anytime!
info@ewsnetwork.com



Resources

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Canadian Mental Health Association. (2004). Seasonal Affective Disorder.

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Images by freepik