



SEASONAL DEPRESSION AWARENESS MONTH DECEMBER



What is Seasonal Depression Awareness Month?

As the days get shorter and the light fades, you might start to feel a bit down. Many people experience "winter blues," but some may struggle with a kind of depression called seasonal affective disorder, or SAD. While there's no sure way to stop SAD from happening, taking steps early on to manage your symptoms can help prevent them from becoming worse over time.

Signs and Symptoms of SAD:

- ▶ Problems with sleep, including getting too much or too little
- ▶ Changes in behavior, such as irritability, restlessness, or anxiety
- ▶ Avoiding friends and family and/or feeling like "hibernating"
- ▶ Fluctuations in weight or appetite
- ▶ Feeling depressed, low levels of energy, or losing interest in things you love

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Self-Care Strategies to Try:



Brighten up your space. Open your blinds during the day to allow sunlight into your work space or home. If possible, try sitting closer to bright windows.



Get outside. [Take a walk](#), eat lunch on a park bench, or just relax in the sunshine. Outdoor light can help even when it's cold or cloudy, especially if you spend some time outside within two hours of waking up.



Make it a habit to exercise. Regular [physical activity](#) can help reduce stress and anxiety, which can make SAD symptoms worse. Getting fit can also boost your self-esteem, helping to improve your mood.



Set a regular [sleep schedule](#). Try waking up and going to bed at the same times every day. During the winter months, try to cut down on napping and sleeping too much.

Did you know?

Confidential, [short-term counseling services](#) are available to you and all of your household members at no cost through your [Living Resources Program](#). Call 844-207-5465 for 24/7 support.



The [Well-Being Coaching program](#) through your Living Resources Program can help you improve your sleep habits, manage stress, build resiliency, and more. Log in or sign up at www.guidanceresources.com and use the **Web ID:** LivingME to connect with a certified personal coach today.

Sources:

[National Institute of Mental Health - SAD](#)
[Mayo Clinic - Symptoms and Causes](#)
[Mayo Clinic - Self Care](#)