

Do You Know About the Winter Blues aka S.A.D?

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Well it is officially December 21, 2020, the first day of winter for the Northern Hemisphere. This seasonal change can be difficult for many of us for multiple reasons. For some the biggest reason is the dislike of the colder weather. However, when it comes to your mental health, some hate it because it starts the onset of what some will call the Winter Blues. But the official name is Seasonal Affective Disorder. S.A.D is the acronym for Seasonal Affective Disorder. It is also referred to as Seasonal Depression. This is a form of depression that occurs when the season changes and when there is typically less sunlight. But! this is not just for winter. Many people experience S.A.D during the warmer months as well.

S.A.D is a bit different than some of the other depressive disorders. The biggest difference is the change of seasons. And often once the affecting season is gone the person will be relieved from the S.A.D symptoms. However, this is not the case for many other depressive types.

Because S.A.D can occur during both the cold and warmer seasons, I have included a list of symptoms to look for. If you think you or someone you love may be experiencing S.A.D. as we go into winter or at the onset of spring, please seek help. There are multiple things that can be done that include at-home self-care routines, psychotherapy or/and medication. However, to understand which treatment is best for you, please seek professional help. It can help you develop a plan of attack for the seasons that seem to attack you.

Baseline Depressive Symptoms that may occur with both S.A.D seasons include:

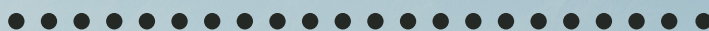
- Feeling depressed majority of the day for multiple days
- Lack of interest in things you enjoy
- Changes in appetite
- Fatigue, sleep problems
- Irritability or agitation over even the simplest of things that are not typically a problem
- Low energy, feeling draggy
- Feelings of hopelessness, worthless; negative self-talk
- Lack of concentration
- May have thoughts of death, dying or suicide

For winter S.A.D additional specific symptoms may include:

- Oversleeping (Hypersomnia)
- Overeating
- Weight gain
- Social withdrawal

For summer S.A.D the additional specific symptoms may include:

- Trouble sleeping (Insomnia)
- Poor appetite; eating less
- Weight loss
- Restlessness
- Anxiety
- Violent behavior



If you reside in the State of Georgia, give me a call. Together we can develop a plan that will help you enjoy every season. If you reside outside of the state of Georgia, contact your local S.A.D professional. To find one in your area, [visit www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com).

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, please reach out for help NOW! Below are some contact numbers as well as text lines that will give you access to people that can help.

Important Numbers:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273- TALK (8255) or TTY # 1-800-799-4TTY(4889)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Website: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- Crisis Text Line: HELLO (741741)

