



SAD: More Than Just the Winter Blues

Seasonal affective disorder is not the same as a simple case of the winter blues. SAD is a type of depression linked to the changing of the seasons. Most people with SAD experience symptoms that begin in the fall and continue through the winter months. Less frequently, people with SAD experience depression in the spring and early summer. The causes of SAD are unknown, but research points to biological clues, including serotonin levels, melatonin levels and vitamin D deficiency.

Symptoms can include:

- Reduced energy levels
- Increased moodiness
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Difficulty concentrating
- Overeating
- Suicidal thoughts

You may be at a higher risk for SAD if you:

- Are female
- Are a young adult
- Live far from the equator
- Have a family history of SAD
- Have depression or bipolar disorder



You don't have to suffer in silence. Treatment for SAD can include light therapy (phototherapy), medications and psychotherapy. Studies of treatment with vitamin D supplements have had mixed results.

Magellan HEALTH

Experiencing stress, depression or anxiety during the holidays or anytime during the year?

Contact the Employee Assistance Program provider, Magellan Healthcare:
1-800-327-5048

Do you think you might suffer from SAD?

Take this free, confidential [quiz](#) to learn more about what your symptoms mean. If you think you have SAD, talk with a health care professional about treatment options. If you have suicidal thoughts, seek immediate help.