

Seasonal Affective Disorder

For some people, colder weather and earlier sunsets send their spirits sinking. They may spend time nesting indoors and avoid contact with the outside world. Sometimes, this is due to a condition called “Seasonal Affective Disorder,” or SAD.

SAD develops, in part, from a lack of exposure to natural light. It typically lasts until spring arrives. Individuals who live in warmer climates may also experience this condition.

Whether you suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder or simply have a case of the winter blues, the following suggestions may make the winter months easier to endure:

- ▶ Avoid dark environments during daylight hours.
 - ▶ Allow as much natural light as possible to shine into your home or workplace.
 - ▶ Exercise daily, preferably outdoors. If you can't get outside, work out in a brightly lit room.
 - ▶ Eat regular, well-balanced meals.
 - ▶ Dress in a way that helps conserve energy and warmth. In cold weather, layers work best.
 - ▶ Make a point of sitting near a window for a few minutes each day, especially when it is sunny outside.
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- ▶ Maintain a regular sleep schedule.
 - ▶ Don't wear sunglasses unless it's difficult to see without them.
 - ▶ If you are struggling with isolation because of the pandemic, arrange to meet a friend for socially distanced walks on sunny days.
 - ▶ If your depressive symptoms last for more than a few days, contact LifeMatters. Help is available 24/7/365.

Call **LifeMatters®** by Empathia toll-free anytime. **1-800-367-7474**

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