



TIPS FOR MANAGING SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

December, which is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) Awareness Month, is a time to check in on yourself and others. As the days grow shorter and colder, many people experience changes in mood and energy. Below are helpful strategies to manage SAD and support mental well-being during the winter months.



Sources:

1MayoClinic.org/Diseases-Conditions/Seasonal-Affective-Disorder/Symptoms-Causes/syc-20364651

2HopkinsMedicine.org/Health/Conditions-And-Diseases/Seasonal-Affective-Disorder

3MayoClinic.org/Diseases-Conditions/Seasonal-Affective-Disorder/Diagnosis-Treatment/drc-20364722

MONITOR YOUR MOOD AND ENERGY LEVELS

Being aware of changes in how you feel can help you recognize SAD early.

- Symptoms may include feeling down most of the day, losing interest in activities, having low energy and sleeping too much¹
- Tracking patterns in your mood and behavior can help you seek timely support²
- If symptoms persist or worsen, consult a health care provider³

GET MORE NATURAL LIGHT

Exposure to sunlight helps regulate your body's internal clock and boosts mood.

- Spend time outdoors during daylight hours
- Open the blinds and sit near windows when indoors
- Consider using a light therapy box, especially in the morning³

STAY ACTIVE

Moving your body can help.

- Exercise and other types of physical activity help relieve stress and anxiety, both of which can increase SAD symptoms

TALK TO A PROFESSIONAL

If symptoms persist or interfere with daily life, seek help from a mental health provider.

- SAD is treatable with therapy, medication or a combination of both
- Cognitive behavioral therapy is especially effective for SAD

STAY CONNECTED

Social withdrawal is a common symptom of SAD²

- Making an effort to connect with people you enjoy being around enables you to tap into your support system for help³

PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Sleep changes are a symptom of SAD.²

- Oversleeping or fatigue may occur
- Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day and reducing napping can help you normalize sleep patterns³