

# DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

*Established 1961*



## Seasonal Depression

Family Advocacy Program Manager  
January 14, 2025



THE NATION'S LOGISTICS COMBAT SUPPORT AGENCY



# Mind Body Mental Fitness

## Seasonal Affective Disorder



### Purpose:

To focus on the mission and vision of the Family Advocacy Program, to bring prevention and education to the warfighter and those that serve them. Ultimately, the goal of mind body mental fitness is to create a harmonious balance between mental and physical health, leading to a more fulfilling and empowered life.

### Agenda:

- Information
- Guidance
- Decision
- Other

The overall classification of this presentation is:  
**Unclassified Controlled Information (CUI)**



# What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

- SAD is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons.
- SAD usually begins and ends at about the same time every year.



# How is SAD Diagnosed?

To be diagnosed with SAD the individual must meet the following criteria

1. The symptoms of depression or the more specific symptoms of winter or summer pattern SAD listed below
2. Their depressive episodes occur during specific seasons (winter/summer) for at least 2 consecutive years.
3. Their depressive episodes during the specific season are more frequent than depressive episodes experienced at other times of the year.

## Symptoms of Fall/Winter SAD

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- Irritability
- Fatigue and low energy
- Hypersensitivity to rejection
- Heavy, “leaden” feeling in the arms or legs
- Oversleeping
- Appetite changes, carbohydrate cravings
- Weight gain
- More sensitive to pain



## Symptoms of Spring & Summer SAD

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- Depression
- Trouble Sleeping
- Weight loss
- Poor appetite
- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Bi-polar mood changes



Seasonal Affective Disorder Quiz		No	Sometimes	Yes
1	Do your symptoms begin during late fall or early winter?			
2	Do you feel sad or down during dreary winter days?			
3	Do you lose the sense of enjoyment for things you normally enjoy?			
4	Do you often feel more fatigued throughout the day in winter than during other times of the year?			
5	Do you have sudden cravings for high-carbohydrate foods? (chips, cookies)?			
6	Do you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night?			
7	Have you had any significant weight gain since your symptoms began?			
8	Do you feel as though you want to be left alone, with a reduced desire to socialize with friends and family?			
9	Do your thoughts and decisions feel as sluggish as your body movements?			
10	Do you wake up feeling as though you never have enough energy throughout the day?			



# Who gets SAD?

- Effects at least 12 million people a year

## SAD By the Numbers

The average age for people who suffer from SAD is **18 to 30**, but it can affect anyone.

10 million Americans are affected, and another **1 to 2 million** have mild SAD episodes.

**6 percent** of cases require hospitalization.

Fewer than **40 percent** of people who need help actually seek help.

**9 out of 10 people** with mental health issues experience stigma and discrimination.

**55 percent** of people have family members with a depression issue.



December through February are the most severe months for **SAD**.

The ratio of women to men with SAD is **4 to 1**.

**350 million** people worldwide suffer from depression.

**60 to 80 percent** of all cases are treatable.

**34 percent** have family members who suffer from alcohol abuse.

**6.7 percent** of all U.S. adults have suffered a major depressive episode.

**50 percent** of people ages 12 to 17 said depression symptoms were why they sought help.





- Feelings of depression almost all day, almost everyday
- Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
- No interest in activities you previously enjoyed
- Loss or gaining weight
- Sleep disturbances
- Feeling fatigue or worn out
- Agitation or irritability
- Difficulty concentrating
- Thoughts of suicidality

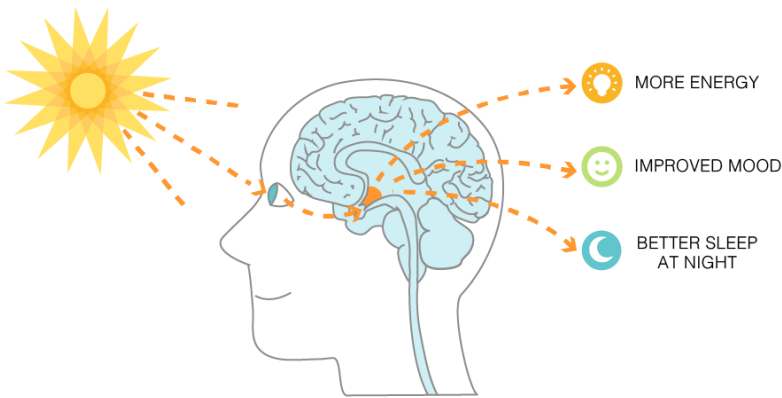


# Doing our Part triggers/communication



## Triggers

- Circadian rhythm disruption
- Light exposure
- Changes in melatonin and serotonin levels
- Weather and temperature
- Stressful and season



Sunlight enters through your eyes. >>>

Acting through the hypothalamus, sunlight regulates our circadian rhythm through complex pathways that include melatonin, serotonin and body temperature. >>>

Improving your circadian rhythm has dramatically positive effects on your body and mood.

## How to Help

- Engage in meaningful activities
- Set small achievable goals (SMART)
- Embrace the outdoors
- Create an enjoyable routine
- Challenge negative thoughts
- Practice Self-Care

## Things to watch for

### Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder



Winter SAD



Summer SAD

Overeating  
Unexplained weight gain  
Sleeping more than usual  
Depression

Loss of appetite  
Unexplained weight loss  
Insomnia  
Irritability

Sources: National Institutes of Health, Dr. Norman Rosenthal

Do's	Don't
Set Boundaries	They you can fix it
Be patient	Give up
Practice assertive Communication	
Show empathy	



- Light therapy - [Seasonal affective disorder treatment: Choosing a light box - Mayo Clinic](#)
- Psychotherapy – Finding a therapist near you
- Antidepressant medication
- Vitamin D
  
- [7 Ways To Get Nature Therapy, Even If You Live In The City](#)
- [AllTrails: Trail Guides & Maps for Hiking, Camping, and Running | AllTrails](#)
- [Go Paddling App - Kayaking Near Me, Canoeing Near Me | Paddling.com](#)
- [Hiking Project | Hiking Trail Maps](#)
- [Hiking Resources - Hike with Confidence - American Hiking Society](#)
- [Find a Park \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)
- [Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing | Scientific Reports](#)
- [Trailforks Mobile App](#)

# When to call the doctor!



- If you have suicidal thoughts
- Social withdrawal
- School or work problems
- Substance abuse
- The depression is significantly impacting and/or threatening a functional life



## **Glossary**

[Seasonal Affective Disorder - National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#)

[What Are the Signs & Symptoms of Depression? | Find Your Words](#)

## **Hotline for Support**

988

<https://www.7cups.com/>

[Crisis Text Line | Text HOME to 741741 Free, 24/7 Mental Health Support](#)

[National Helpline for Mental Health, Drug, Alcohol Issues | SAMHSA](#)

## **Videos / Podcast**

[Life Extension's Super Sale 2024 Starts NOW!](#)  
[adaa.org/resources-professionals/journal-media/podcasts](#)  
[10 podcasts about mental health - The Washington Post](#)

## **Children and SAD**

[The Scope | University of Utah Health](#)

[Could your child have seasonal affective disorder? - Children's National](#)

[Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\) \(for Parents\) | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

[Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\) \(for Teens\) | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

[Winter Blues and Seasonal Affective Disorder - HealthyChildren.org](#)

## **Books**

The Disappearing Girl By: Lisa Machoian

Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy By: David D. Burns, MD

Mind Over Mood: Chang How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) By: Dennis Greenberger, PhD

The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression By: Andrew Solomon, PhD

Coping with the Seasons: Workbook: A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach to Seasonal Affective Disorder By: Kelly J. Rohan

