



Recognize the Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder

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The holiday season is supposed to be a time filled with warmth and cheer. But, what if you feel depressed, tired and unsociable instead? If your good mood seems to have gone south for the winter, you may be experiencing **seasonal affective disorder**, also known as seasonal depression. According to the National Mental Health Disorders Association, nearly 5 percent of people in the United States experience severe seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Approximately 10-20 percent experiences a milder version of SAD.

SAD often affects people living in areas that experience more dramatic seasonal changes to daylight hours because they are farther away from the equator. The seasonal disorder can occur in adults and children of either gender but is more common among adults, especially women. According to the Cleveland Clinic, three-quarters of the people who suffer from SAD are women, and most are within their 20s, 30s or 40s.

Symptoms include: sadness, irritability, low energy levels, trouble concentrating, memory problems, increased appetite (especially for sweets and carbohydrates), weight gain, and increased desire to be alone. These symptoms can affect a person's work performance and relationships. Exercising, eating healthy foods, socializing, and getting exposure to natural light can help curb symptoms, but seek the help of a mental health professional if your symptoms persist or worsen.

“Therapy can help people identify negative thoughts and behavior changes associated with seasonal affective disorder, and develop coping skills to address symptoms,” Erin Bickle, Director of Counseling Services at WellSpring Resources, said.

[WellSpring Resources](#) is a leader in evidence-based care for depression – in a national study, the agency was declared the top organization for its adoption of highly effective practices for depression treatment. If you feel that you or someone you love might be suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder, seek help from WellSpring Resources or

another behavioral health provider. Call (618) 462-2331 today to learn more about SAD or WellSpring Resources.

Founded in 1959, WellSpring Resources is a total mental wellness resource serving Madison, Jersey, and Calhoun counties. With offices in Alton and Jerseyville WellSpring's compassionate professionals work with children, adults and families to inspire hope and personal growth. Last year, 4,600 people sought to change their lives for the better through WellSpring's behavioral health and substance abuse services. Visit www.wellspringresources.co for more information.