

## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that comes and goes in a seasonal pattern. SAD is sometimes known as "winter depression" because the symptoms are usually more apparent and more severe during the winter.

A few people with SAD may have symptoms during the summer and feel better during the winter.

Symptoms of SAD can include:

- a persistent low mood
- a loss of pleasure or interest in normal everyday activities
- irritability
- feelings of despair, guilt and worthlessness
- feeling lethargic (lacking in energy) and sleepy during the day
- sleeping for longer than normal and finding it hard to get up in the morning
- craving carbohydrates and gaining weight

For some people, these symptoms can be severe and have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

While we do not know the exact causes of SAD, some scientists think that certain hormones made deep in the brain trigger attitude-related changes at certain times of year. Experts believe that SAD may be related to these hormonal changes. One theory is that less sunlight during fall and winter leads to the brain making less serotonin, a chemical linked to brain pathways that regulate mood.

When symptoms of SAD first develop, it can be confusing, both for the person with SAD and family and friends. Some parents or teachers may mistakenly think that teens with SAD are slacking off or not trying their best.

If you think you're experiencing some of the symptoms of SAD, talk to a parent, guidance counsellor, or other trusted adult about what you're feeling.

### Resources:

*Mind guide to Seasonal Affective Disorder*

*Understanding Seasonal Affective Disorder*

*SAD – More than the winter blues*

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<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/about-sad/>

Coping with SAD

<https://movietvtechgeeks.com/coping-with-seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/>

Help Guide

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad.htm>