

Dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Did you know that seasonal affective disorder (SAD) affects around two-million people in the UK?

Every year, millions of people experience a feeling of depression during the autumn and winter months. If you're one of these people, you may brush it off as a case of the "winter blues" or a seasonal funk. However, it could mean that you're suffering from seasonal affective disorder, also commonly known as SAD.

What is SAD?

SAD is a type of depression related to changes in the seasons. Symptoms of SAD most commonly start for people in the autumn as daylight comes and goes quicker and continues into the winter months. Sufferers of SAD tend to find their symptoms fade or entirely disappear in the spring and summer months.

What are the most common symptoms of SAD?

The most common symptoms of SAD are an increased moodiness and a feeling as though your energy has been sapped. But there are other signs and symptoms to look out for:

- A loss of pleasure or interest in everyday activities
- Feelings of despair, guilt and worthlessness
- Feeling lethargic and sleeping during the day
- Having thoughts of not wanting to live
- A decreased sex drive
- Experiencing carbohydrate cravings, overeating and weight gain.

The key to managing SAD

There's no proven way to prevent the development of SAD. But you may be able to reduce and manage your symptoms by taking steps early on. If you know the time of the year your symptoms tend to start, you can work to ward off serious changes in mood, appetite and energy levels. Putting preventative measures in place before symptoms begin helps many people to manage SAD effectively. Some people only need treatment during their period of SAD, whilst others will need continuous treatment throughout the year to prevent symptoms from returning.

SAD is different for everyone. Find what works for you.

Try This Today!



If you think you have symptoms of SAD and are struggling to cope, speak to your GP.

SAD can be tricky to diagnose because the symptoms are similar to many other types of depression. So, it's important you seek the guidance and help of a healthcare professional.

There are a range of treatments available for SAD, such as light therapy, talking therapies, lifestyle measures to help reduce stress, and antidepressant medicine. Your GP will recommend a treatment programme that's right for you.

And if you feel comfortable to do so, talk to your employer and share your experience. It may be that they can put provisions in place that help ease your symptoms whilst at work. Plus, they may be able to help you with additional healthcare support.