

Winter blues? Or are you really SAD? (Seasonal Affective Disorder)

Last month, you may have heard about Blue Monday, the day rumoured to be the most depressing Monday of the year due to a combination of weather, work and financial factors. However, winter can be a continuous struggle for sufferers of SAD.

Before you read the complete article, look at this vocabulary and find it in the text:

to sap: to weaken, to reduce

moody: angry or sad, in a bad mood

worthless: of no value

to remain: to continue to be

to come into play: to be relevant

onset: beginning

to disrupt: to interrupt, to alter

drop: reduction, decrease

to trigger: to cause something to happen or start

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons – SAD begins and ends at about the same times every year. If you're like most people with SAD, your symptoms start in the autumn and continue into the winter months, **sapping** your energy and making you feel **moody**.

Common symptoms include:

- Feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day
- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Having low energy and problems sleeping
- Experiencing changes in your appetite or weight
- Feeling **worthless** or guilty, and having difficulty concentrating
- Having frequent thoughts of death or suicide

In most cases, seasonal affective disorder symptoms appear during late autumn or early winter and go away during the sunnier days of spring and summer.

Symptoms may start out mild and become more severe as the season progresses.

The specific cause of seasonal affective disorder **remains** unknown. Some factors that may **come into play** include:

- Your biological clock (circadian rhythm): the reduced level of sunlight in autumn and winter may cause winter-**onset** SAD. This decrease in sunlight may **disrupt** your body's internal clock and lead to feelings of depression.
- Serotonin levels: a **drop** in serotonin – a brain chemical (neurotransmitter) that affects mood – might play a role in SAD. Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin that may **trigger** depression.
- Melatonin levels: the change in season can disrupt the balance of the body's level of melatonin, which plays a role in sleep patterns and mood.

SAD is diagnosed more often in women than in men, and occurs more frequently in younger adults than in older adults. Factors that may increase your risk of seasonal affective disorder include:

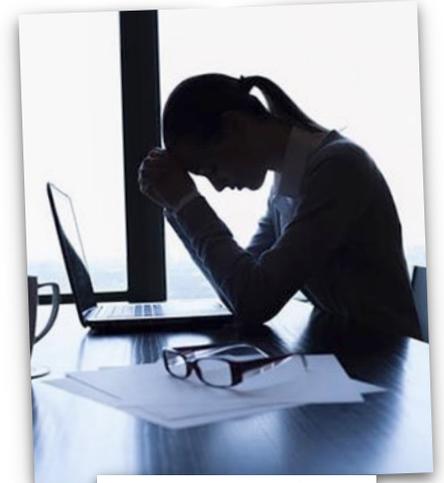
- Family history: people with SAD may be more likely to have blood relatives with SAD or another form of depression.
- Having major depression or bipolar disorder: symptoms of depression may worsen seasonally if you have one of these conditions.
- Living far from the equator: SAD appears to be more common among people who live far north or south of the equator, where they have less sunlight in winter and longer days in summer.

Adapted from www.mayoclinic.org by ECP coach Alison Keable

Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- How does the winter affect your mood?
- Why do we tend to feel blue during winter?
- Do you know anyone who suffers from SAD?
- What advice would you give to someone suffering from SAD?
- Have you heard of light therapy (phototherapy)?



At times, it can be difficult to concentrate on your job in winter. Things can really get on top of you.



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Time: 19:30 to 21:30

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Price: Free! Friends welcome!

WhatsApp John for more details on:

657 73 13 54

Every last Friday of the month

Next chat: Sat 2nd February

LIVE!English presents:

COFFEE SATURDAYS!

Come and socialise in English!

Every first Saturday of the month

Time: 11:00 to 12:30

Place: Panadería Bertiz, C/Francia

Price: Just bring enough for a cup of coffee!

Friends welcome!

WhatsApp Alison for more details on:

608 42 64 92

FRED '19 talks

Fun, Relevant, Engaging Discourse

Thanks to everyone who came to our FRED Talks event last Friday!
Solmaz, Igor and John - our fabulous speakers - opened, filled and blew our minds!!



Express your emotions!

To feel **blue** means to feel sad. Here are a few other expressions related to sadness.

"to be down in the dumps":

To feel depressed or gloomy.

You've been down in the dumps since you failed your driving test.

"to be beside yourself":

To be completely overcome with a negative emotion such as worry, sadness or anger.

She was beside herself with grief when her dog died.

"your heart sinks":

This is how you feel upon receiving bad news.

His heart sank when he saw the pile of English homework he had to do.

"to have a sinking feeling":

To feel bad because you think something bad has happened or is going to happen.

I had a sinking feeling that I'd forgotten my wallet.

"to be reduced to tears":

To feel so unhappy that you cry.

The teacher shouted at her so much that she was reduced to tears.

"to cry your eyes out":

To cry a lot and for a long time.

I cried my eyes out at the end of Titanic.

Also:

"to be under the weather":

To feel ill.

I don't think I'll make it to work today. I'm quite under the weather.