



Sara Bukowski, MA, LPCA



Treating Seasonal Affective Disorder

As the weather begins to change and the sun sets earlier in the day, many people find themselves struggling to maintain an upbeat, positive attitude. They begin to feel down, lethargic, and moody. This is a condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Most people affected by SAD begin to feel the symptoms during early fall, and it can continue through the winter. Typical symptoms of SAD include loss of energy, social withdrawal, anxiety, oversleeping, appetite changes, and difficulty concentrating, among others (Mayo Clinic, 2013). While there is no known cause to SAD, it is thought that reduced sunlight brings a drop in serotonin levels, which affects mood.



While some people choose to treat Seasonal Affective Disorder with antidepressants, there are alternative lifestyle changes that may help as well.

- ◇ Get more sunlight - Vitamin D can be a big mood-booster, so try to get outside at least 15 minutes every day. This amount of sunshine, even if the weather is chilly, can help to alleviate feelings of depression.
- ◇ Exercise - Regular exercise can relieve anxiety and provide your body with much needed energy.
- ◇ Take a multivitamin - Ensuring that your body is getting the proper nutrients will help you to feel better.



While most cases of Seasonal Affective Disorder are mild, some cases may trigger deeper symptoms of depression. If you find yourself unable to function at work, experiencing moderate to severe appetite or sleep changes, or begin to have suicidal thoughts, seek additional help. Our experienced therapists are available to talk to you and assist you in working through this challenging time.

For more information, please call our administrative office at (919) 649-5882.

References

Mayo Clinic, 2013. www.mayoclinic.com

CONTACT INFORMATION :

809 Spring Forest Rd

Suite 1000

Raleigh, NC 27609

(919) 649-5882

www.rosariocounseling.com