

February 2024 | Prevention Initiative

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

What is seasonal affective disorder?
During specific months of the year, some people experience negative, depressive symptoms such as feeling hopeless, irritable, and anxious. Other symptoms include changes in sleep, appetite, and energy levels. There are a wide variety of symptoms that can occur, but the critical factors involved with this disorder are that symptoms impair the individual's ability to function regularly and occur during a certain time of the year.

When does this occur?
It may come as a surprise, but this can occur during the winter months or the summer months! Winter-pattern SAD is more common and more researched than summer-pattern SAD, but both patterns do occur.

Why do people experience this?
Based on research, this disorder is a result of changes in levels of serotonin, vitamin D, and or melatonin. Shorter daylight hours in winter months can cause vitamin D to decrease. Decreased serotonin levels are shown to occur in both winter and summer pattern. Melatonin levels may increase or decrease, resulting in too much or too little sleep during certain months of the year.

What can you do improve the effects of seasonal affective disorder?
Vitamin D supplementation, light therapy, antidepressant medication, and psychotherapy are all treatment options. Self-care activities are also critical in reducing the negative symptoms experienced with this disorder.

Information provided by
Joe Martens, PI Mental Heath Specialist

Family Activities

In partnership with SAL Early Head Start, SAL Prevention Initiative will be hosting a Literacy Event on Saturday, February 10, 2024, at the Moline Public Library. The literacy event will be held from 10:30am-12:30pm.

We invite all Prevention Initiative families to join us. Please RSVP to your child's teacher/provider. We look forward to seeing you.

Establish Healthy Habits as a Family

Some ways to promote healthy habits with your children:

- Create a regular routine for your family. Routine bedtime schedule, brushing teeth, reading, mealtimes, nap times.
- When it comes to meals: Be a role model for healthy eating, encourage your children to be involved with meal preparation, let them set the table.
- Give choices when possible (ex. Do you want an apple or a banana?). Make sure they are choices you are okay with.
- Encourage everyone to be active when possible. Jumping Jacks, pushups, sit-ups.

Contact us

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Monday - Friday
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.