

# Holiday Blues & Seasonal Affective Disorder - SAD



The winter months and holiday season have a tendency to cause depression. The impact of COVID 19 can only intensify the likelihood of depression.

Stress of the holidays, cold dreary weather, isolation, fewer hours of day light, and lack of socialization can cause both long-term and short-term depression.

Two types of depression that can happen concurrently during the winter months are Holiday Blues and Seasonal Affective Disorder. They are two distinctly different conditions.

The holiday blues are time and situationally limited, happening just during the holiday season usually from Thanksgiving to New Years. The holidays can trigger something that happened in the past that causes people to be depressed, lonely, and stressed.

SAD is a form of depression that occurs the same season of the year. It is most common in the fall and winter months when there are fewer hours of sunlight. Many people are not even aware that SAD is a serious mental health issue, leading to underdiagnoses and under treatment.

## Signs and symptoms:

- Difficulty sleeping or too much sleep
- Feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and/or hopelessness
- Stomach problems
- Craving carbohydrates
- Feeling sad
- Losing interest
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood changes

## Tips for managing depression during the holidays and winter season:

- Maintain routines
- Drink in moderation
- Safely connect with other people
- Eat well
- Monitor both physical and mental health
- Practice good sleeping habits
- Consider light therapy
- Get outside
- Seek professional help

If you or a loved one could be suffering from depression and may need specialized treatment, we are available by phone and in person 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays to assess your needs.