

SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) begins and ends at about the same times every year and most commonly begins in late fall and continues into the winter months.

The following excerpts on SAD are from the book, *Seasonal Affective Disorder For Dummies* (2007) by Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott.

“SAD is a form of clinical depression. SAD is different from nonseasonal depression in that it tends to recur every year and follows a seasonal pattern of onset in the fall or winter and remission in the spring or summer” — Kelly J. Rohan

“Most scientists believe that the primary cause of SAD is diminished sunlight that accompanies the shorter days in the winter. For many people, reduced light triggers changes that reverberate throughout their bodies and minds, causing their moods to darken.” — Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“People who experience moderate changes with the seasons are said to have subsyndromal SAD (S-SAD). The bottom line is that SAD symptoms are very common and get more common as distance from the equator increases.” — Kelly J. Rohan

“People suffering from seasonal affective disorder (SAD) typically internalize negative and pessimistic beliefs and

feel unable to deal with everyday problems. Fortunately, helping folks change the way they think helps them feel better and live their lives more fully. Literally hundreds of studies support the value of thought therapy for the treatment of depression.” – Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“A highly effective way of alleviating SAD involves using the mind to re-establish good moods, increase energy, and instill hope. Again, the mind, body, and environment interact. When depressed people figure out how to think in nondepressed ways, their brains show improvements in functioning.” – Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“SAD or any type of depression can be tricky to diagnose because symptoms vary widely from person to person. Some people experience overwhelming fatigue; others feel out of sorts. Many individuals are keenly aware of their hopeless moods while others complain more about vague symptoms, such as feeling run-down or a lack of enthusiasm. The folks in the latter group commonly deny feeling depressed when asked. And sometimes a bad or sad mood is just a bad or sad mood.” – Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“The winter blues is similar to, but not as severe as, SAD. You may feel a little down for several days when it’s overcast and cold outside, and that’s not unusual. You’re sludging through mushy snow and getting wet and cold

and downright dirty at times (don't you just hate that sandy salt thrown all over the street and sidewalk?). But for most people, a nice cup of hot chocolate or a cheery fire is enough to perk up their moods until the sun comes out again. Symptoms that are pretty much the same as SAD, just less oppressive and usually fewer in number, persist throughout the winter season.” – Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“There's more to SAD than changing seasons. SAD is a real form of depression that can seriously impact a sufferer. Moods associated with SAD can be so dark that the person starts missing work, withdraws from people, and in rare cases, contemplates suicide.” – Laura L. Smith & Charles H. Elliott

“These estimated fourteen million Americans are said to be suffering from seasonal affective disorder, or SAD, a condition now generally accepted by the medical community and the public at large. Another fourteen percent of the adult U.S. population is estimated to suffer from a lesser form of SAD, known as the winter blues.” – Norman E. Rosenthal