

# Time of Year Darkness

Are you affected by the lack of light during the winter? It's a common affliction and causes many people to become depressed. There are special lights that you can buy to help make up for this lack of darkness.

It's an actual condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). For some, it can be the cause of severe depression which could require seeking medical help. Most people, however, can use simple measures to help alleviate the conditions associated with it.

If you decide to buy one of the special lights, make sure you follow the manufacturer's directions. Some people use the light for too long which can have the opposite effect. If you find you are getting overstimulated when you use it, try to reduce the number of minutes that you keep it on. Also, reduce the number of days per week.

According to WebMD.com, light therapy is best when used first thing in the morning. It's unclear whether the effects help at other times of the day. However, what is good for one person may not be for others, so experiment with different times to see what works for you.

If you want to stay away from light therapy but still want to reduce your symptoms of SAD, try socializing. While being with friends won't help with the light situation, it will lift your spirits. Talk to your friends and agree to meet at least once per week. It gives you something to look forward to, and that will certainly help.

Another way to beat the winter doldrums is to stay active. After coming down from the holiday burst of energy, you can bring yourself back up by finding activities. Check online for events in your area or look for groups where they meet in person. You can find these on social media groups such as groups available on LinkedIn or Facebook.

Some people suggest going to bed earlier and sleeping more during the winter months. The idea is that you will spend more of the dark hours sleeping and won't

notice the darkness as much. This approach isn't something everyone can get away with but could be worth trying.

SAD is a recognized medical condition, and if you are experiencing symptoms, you should take it seriously. When left untreated, your low spirits can turn to depression which is much harder to beat. When it gets to the point of serious depression, you need to see a specialist trained in this area. Don't just pass the condition off as something that will eventually pass because it may not.