



Seasonal Affective Disorder

Information from
Milestone Staff Psychiatrists



What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

Seasonal Affective disorder is a mood disorder that occurs with seasonal changes. It was first recognized in 1984 at the National Institute of Mental Health and is now classified as a mood disorder.

Is Seasonal Affective Disorder most prevalent in the fall, with the end of Daylight Savings Time and anticipation of winter?

This disorder can occur in winter, but summer as well - in the summer version the symptoms may be associated with anxiety as well . Those affected are usually well other times of the year, but when winter starts, their symptoms start as well.

What causes Seasonal Affective Disorder?

No one is sure why this disorder happens, but research about the causes continues.

Are there typical symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder?

The symptoms are those of a mood disorder or depression.

Can anyone experience Seasonal Affective Disorder, no matter where they live?

The incidence is varied, but warmer climates such as Florida have a much lower occurrence (almost 10 times less) than northeastern states such as New Hampshire or Maine.

There's a lot of talk about "Light" or "Photo" therapy.

The treatment is sunlight, or a bright light, for short periods each day during the affected season .

Are there other treatments that are helpful?

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and antidepressants help, as well as good sleep, vitamins and exercise.

Call Milestone for more information and to seek help: 412-243-3400.