



# mainewell bliss

## Seasonal Affective Disorder



### WHAT IS S.A.D AND HOW DO WE HANDLE IT?



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that follows a seasonal pattern most commonly beginning in late fall and continuing through the winter months. Reduced sunlight can disrupt your body's internal clock, serotonin levels, and melatonin, impacting mood, energy, and sleep.

#### Common Signs & Symptoms

- Low energy or persistent fatigue
- Increased sleep or difficulty waking
- Changes in appetite, especially carb cravings
- Feeling sad, down, or hopeless
- Reduced motivation or difficulty focusing
- Withdrawing from social interactions

During the darker months and after daylight saving time ends, reduced sunlight lowers serotonin levels; the chemical that helps regulate mood and energy. When serotonin drops, melatonin production naturally increases, making you feel more tired and sluggish during the day. Without intentionally getting sunlight or boosting serotonin in other ways, the fatigue can feel completely outside of your control.

#### Ways to Cope & Support Wellbeing

- Spend time outdoors or near natural light
- Use a light therapy lamp (10,000 lux).
- Stay active with movement that feels doable
- Maintain consistent sleep and wake times.
- Stay connected with coworkers, friends, and loved ones.
  - Look into supplements like vitamin D
- If symptoms persist, consider reaching out to a healthcare provider

#### Workplace Tips

- Take short outdoor breaks to boost mood and alertness. Take a step outside when sun is out
- Pack a healthy lunch

#### Huddles

- Check in with your leaders or the MaineWell Bliss wellness team for support resources

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