

# Be aware of the WINTER BLUES



The colder weather and darker evenings can affect our mood, energy levels, sleeping patterns, and appetites. But if this affects your daily life, you may have **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**, also known as the 'Winter Blues.' SAD can be caused by the reduced amount of sunlight in winter, which can affect:



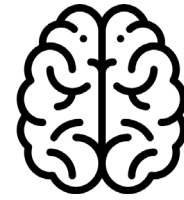
### Your body clock.

Your body uses sunlight to regulate your sleep, appetite and mood, but lower light levels can disrupt these.



### The production of melatonin, a sleep hormone.

People with SAD may produce much higher levels in winter, causing excessive tiredness.



### The production of serotonin, a hormone affecting mood.

Reduced sunlight can lead to lower levels of serotonin, making you feel depressed.

There are some things you can do that can help:



### Spend some time each day outside, and open your curtains to let light inside.

Some people find it helpful to use a special lamp that mimics natural light.



### Exercise and spending time in green spaces are helpful.

Physical activity can boost your self-esteem and help you concentrate, sleep & feel better.



### Plan for the difficult times.

For example, freeze meals if you know you won't have the energy to cook or make sure you have time to relax or get an early night.



**Connect with an EAP Professional** who can help with Seasonal Affective Disorder. Call **1-800-854-1446** to get connected with therapists and other tools.