



Hi Everyone! Here is the 15<sup>th</sup> issue of Hypno-Healthgram. You can access previous issues on the Newsletter page of my website: [www.hypno-health.net](http://www.hypno-health.net)

*Take Control Of Your Life With Hypnosis  
Eliminate negative habits; Create healthy Changes; Achieve optimal well-being.*

February 2012

### **SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER**

Just as diminishing amounts of light affect the seasonal activities of animals (hibernation and reproduction), they may also affect humans. Changes in sunlight patterns can cause a shift in our internal biological clocks (circadian rhythm) and knock them out of sync with daily schedules. The diminished daylight of winter causes some changes in the amounts of certain hormones circulating in the bloodstream. Serotonin (thought to regulate feelings of happiness and well-being) decreases, and melatonin (produced by the pineal gland) increases. This increased level of melatonin circulating in the bloodstream may cause symptoms of depression and is thought to be a factor in seasonal affective disorder (SAD). If the declining amount of light in winter months gets you down, really down, you may have seasonal affective disorder. Symptoms include: depressed mood; irritability; hopelessness; anxiety; loss of energy; social withdrawal; oversleeping (feeling like you want to hibernate); loss of interest in activities you normally enjoy; appetite changes, especially a craving for foods high in carbohydrates such as pasta, rice, bread and cereal; weight gain; and difficulty concentrating and processing information.[1]

SAD affects a half million people in the United States every year between September and April, with symptoms peaking in December, January and February. (The Winter Blues, a milder form of SAD, may affect even more people.) Women comprise 75% of SAD sufferers.[2] The prevalence of SAD ranges from 1.4% in Florida to 9.7% in New Hampshire, with Alaska having a rate of 8.9%. Other countries with established SAD rates include Ireland (20%), the Netherlands (10%), and Finland (9.5%). Cloud cover is thought to contribute to SAD symptoms.[3] Seasonal affective disorder occurs in both the southern and northern hemispheres' winters, but has rarely been detected in people living within 30 degrees of the equator.

There are many different treatments recommended for seasonal affective disorder. They include bright light therapy, antidepressant medications, cognitive-behavioral therapy, ionized-air administration, supplementation of melatonin, vitamin D ingestion and exercise.[4] Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, Sc.D., a vitamin D specialist at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, suggests that between 1,000 and 2,000 IU daily may help even out winter moods.[5] One study showed that 60 minutes of daily indoor cardiovascular exercise was just as effective as light therapy in diminishing the symptoms of SAD. And intensive weight training (enough to tire you out after 10 reps) can unleash a hefty amount of serotonin, while regularly lifting heavy weights can significantly reduce many SAD symptoms.[6] For milder

symptoms, spending time outdoors during the day and letting more sunlight into homes and businesses may help.

If you or anyone you know has Seasonal Affective Disorder, hypnosis may offer some relief from the symptoms. Jennifer K. Gray, BA, C.Ht., director of The Inner Journey, a hypnotherapy practice in the Boston area, says: “Hypnotherapy is an effective alternative treatment for SAD victims because it can be used to balance the brain chemical levels to a level consistent with those found in the same client during the summer months or during adequate lighting conditions. Facilitating the client in a creative visualization experience involving a sun-filled atmosphere can create physiological responses consistent with those experienced with actual sun exposure. Similarly, the psychological effects associated with the visualized sunlight exposure can create a mindset comparable to that during the summer months.”<sup>[7]</sup> Alan B. Densky, a Certified Hypnotist at Neuro-Vision in Sarasota, Florida, specializing in depression and stress related symptoms, states: “Hypnosis and NLP (neuro linguistic programming) are both helpful, innovative treatments that promise a rapid escape from seasonal affective disorder feelings without consuming enormous resources in terms of money or energy.”<sup>[8]</sup> Angela McKrill, D.Hyp, a clinical hypnotherapist in London, England, suggests hypnotherapy can help relieve symptoms of seasonal affective disorder in these ways: “[Hypnotherapy can] restore nervous, endocrine (hormonal) and immune balance; reduce stress and increase relaxation; regulate sleep patterns; help a person make necessary lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, etc.); identify and resolve emotional or psychological blocks that may be triggered by SAD and other depressive states; minimize negative self-talk, limiting beliefs and worrisome thinking – and restore a sense of calm, confidence and self-esteem; and establish mind-body communication, thereby increasing self awareness and intuition.”<sup>[9]</sup>

[1] <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/seasonal-affective-disorder/DS00195>

[2] [www.nmha.org/go/sad](http://www.nmha.org/go/sad)

[3] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seasonal\\_affective\\_disorder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seasonal_affective_disorder)

[4] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seasonal\\_affective\\_disorder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seasonal_affective_disorder)

[5] Women’s Health, January/February, 2012: “Winter Blues Bumming You Out?” pp. 72-74

[6] Women’s Health, January/February, 2012: “Winter Blues Bumming You Out?” pp. 72 - 74

[7] <http://www.hypnos.co.uk/hypnomag/jkgray.htm>

[8] <http://www.neuro-vision.us/content/806105-seasonal-affective.php>

[9] <http://www.angelamckrill.com/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/>

### **HEALTH TIPS**

Retrieved from *Men's Health Magazine* at <http://www.menshealth.com/spotlight/heart/100-ways-to-live-forever.php>

- **Watch a scary movie.** Participating in any activity that causes your heart to race – slasher flicks, a good book, even being in love – also makes your heart stronger, according to researchers at

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Upsetting the rhythm once in a while is like hitting your heart's reset button, which helps it keep on ticking.

- **Dive in the pool.** Researchers in the U.K. found that men who burn just 50 calories a day in strenuous activities like swimming and hiking are 62 percent less likely to die of heart disease than men who burn nearly seven times as many calories – 340 per day – during less active pursuits like walking and golfing.
- **Meditate 20 minutes a day.** According to researchers at Thomas Jefferson University, this daily downtime may reduce your anxiety and depression by more than 25 percent. That's a critical change, since a University of Florida study found that patients with coronary artery disease who had the most mental stress were three times more likely to die during the period of the study than those with the least stress.



Happy Health!

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**Remember:** *Hypnosis can be done in the office, by phone, and via Skype.*