



# How to Brighten the SAD Season

What can you do to feel less blue in the winter? SAD experts recommend the following:

- ◇ Try to get an hour of outdoor light every day, whatever the weather. Take a walk at lunch time - exercise helps reduce SAD symptoms.
- ◇ Be careful when you buy a house or rent an apartment. Are there enough windows? Do they face south and west?
- ◇ Install skylights if you can afford them.
- ◇ Decorate rooms with light colors. But avoid stark white, which can be depressing.
- ◇ Make the most of the light you have. Clean your windows. Don't block the glass with drapes, furniture or shrubbery.
- ◇ Take vacations in the winter, not the summer. Go to a sunny place if you can.
- ◇ Avoid any diet that severely restricts carbohydrates. Your body craves bread and pasta for a reason: They increase energy levels. Cut back on fats and calories instead.
- ◇ Reduce stress levels, especially around the holidays. Thanksgiving and Christmas fall in our two darkest months. Entertain less. Don't feel you have to make visits to every single relative. Don't send non-essential Christmas cards.
- ◇ Trying to meet other people's expectations when you want to shut down can make you feel like a failure.
- ◇ Share your problems. You can join the National Organization for Seasonal Affective Disorder, which sends out a newsletter. Write to NOSAD, P.O. Box 401333, Washington, D.C. 20016