



MSHA's Occupational Illness and Injury Prevention Program Miner's Tip

**Your
Health
Comes
First!**

"Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)"

Category : **All Mines**

Mine Type: **Health**

As summer comes to an end and the days get shorter, some of us will experience bouts of depression. These feelings of depression may be due to a condition called seasonal affective disorder. Symptoms begin in the fall, peak in the winter and diminish in the spring. The causes of SAD are unclear but heredity, stress, body chemistry and sunlight may play a role. Reduced sunlight may affect circadian rhythms which regulate the body's sleep/wake cycles. SAD affects approximately 6-10 percent of the population with women reporting more cases. Another 10-20 percent may experience the milder, "Winter Blues". SAD symptoms include depression, loss of energy, anxiety, irritability, headaches, increased sleep, loss of interest in sex, overeating, weight gain and difficulty concentrating. If you experience depression through two winter seasonal cycles, you should contact your physician. SAD symptoms can occur in other seasons when daylight is diminished. For example, foggy conditions, poorly lit work places, buildings without windows, and working at night can induce some of the same symptoms.



Some things you can do to cope with seasonal depression:

- Increase the amount of light in your work area
- Walk outdoors on sunny days
- Exercise regularly
- Improve stress management
- Take Winter vacations in sunny locales

Ref: [Mayo Clinic](#)

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Remember - Safety and Health are Values!