Seasonal Blues

Definition

Seasonal blues is a seasonal mood variation that causes feelings of sadness, unhappiness, and depression due to shorter daylight hours, longer nights, and various restrictions caused by rainy cold weather.

Why do some of us experience winter blues?

Our biological clock confuses wakefulness versus sleep due to a change in how it responds to light when the sun rises up late and sets down early.

How do I know that I am suffering from seasonal/winter blues?

- Deep sadness
- Irritability
- Social withdrawal
- Fatigue
- Over sleepiness
- Difficulty waking up
- Over eating
- Decreased desire for physical activity

When the above symptoms are seriously affecting your life, only a professional can give you a precise diagnosis of your case. It is not recommended that you diagnose yourself but surely if these symptoms improve as the weather improves then it is likely to be winter blues. However, we should not mix normal low mood related to other stressors in winter with winter blues.

How to overcome winter blues?

- Seek counseling if you have any worry about your psychological state.
- Expose yourself to daylight preferably before 10 a.m.
- Take advantage of every sunny moment to get sufficient vitamin D.
- Exercise outdoors. It will help you relieve stress.
- Brighten up your room by increasing the light intensity.
- Sleep at around the same time every night.
- Avoid mid-day napping.
- Seek social support from family and friends.
- Eat regular healthy meals to maintain stable levels of energy.
- Decrease alcohol and caffeine intake because they interfere with your sleep cycle and your habits.
- Keep yourself warm to preserve body heat and energy.

It is important to seek counseling to determine the nature of any mood problem and assess its severity. Counseling or talk therapy will help you identify your issues and will help you better address and manage your problems.