

How to Fight Winter Related Depression

Written by Dr. Niru Prasad

HOW TO FIGHT WINTER RELATED DEPRESSION BY Niru Prasad,
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How To Fight Winter Related Depressions? There is a strong link between dark moods, lethargy, excessive weight gain and depressions related to change of seasons especially during the late autumn and winter. The scientists and researchers in the past have done many experiments in cooperation with psychiatrists to prove the facts that:

a. Millions of Americans are affected during autumn and winter with depressions also known as seasonal affective disorder. b. The autumn and winter brings depression, lethargy and craving for sweets, women more than men making, them more vulnerable to gain excessive weight further contributing to depressions. c. An increased exposure to bright light in humans can cure these individuals by suppressing the production of dark related hormones called Melatonin which contributes to depression. d. The fear of darkness, loneliness, bad weather outside due to winter storms, makes the elderly very vulnerable to depressions. e. The seasonal affective disorder can affect people at any age however, generally it begins around 20, more common in women, and in individuals with genetic predispositions to depressions. f. This is a transient phase of depression and has the best prognosis due to the fact that mood starts getting better during spring and summer. The strong suggestions and recommendations from the major

scientists, psychiatrists who have done many research on seasonal affective disorders are:

1. Light up your life. Try to get as much light as possible during winter. Make your house bright by removing drapes. Paint walls with lighter colors trim the bushes in front of windows and use strong bulbs to light up your rooms. 2. Since women spend more time in kitchen than men, make sure kitchen is bright with enough sunlight. The ceiling mercury lighting fixtures contribute to bright kitchen and should be preferred as the method of lighting kitchen if possible 3. Exercise outdoors. You can reduce winter depressions by participating in outdoor winter sports activity. Even an hour of morning or noon walking or jogging, wearing proper clothes on a daily basis can reduce your depression. 4. Eat a well balanced diet. Eating a well balanced diet with extra added carbohydrates as snack in form of sweets can improve your mood when you are depressed. The sweet snack should not be mixed with your major protein rich meals. The carbohydrates change the brain chemistry by releasing chemical serotonin, a neurotransmitter that is responsible for mood lifting. The premenopausal women with seasonal affective disorders also have low level of another neurotransmitter dopamine, contributing to their depressions. 5. Get professional help. Since major or minor depressions might also be due to organic causes such as thyroid disorders, get complete physical check up. The psychiatrists are using special lighting fixtures four times brighter than household lighting under which the patient sits for a minimum of 2 to 4 hours every day to cure the depression. 6. Think positive. Be cheerful and think positive. Sometimes going out to shopping malls and looking at spring and summer clothes cheer up the mood. Remember, of all kinds of depressions, this is the most benign type and is treated easily. For most people, it will pass by spring and can be treated successfully. For those who suffer from seasonal affective disorders there is reward of exceptionally good summer Remember:

April showers bring May flowers Winter blasts bring spring joys.

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Laughter is the best medicine to improve your mood when you are sad because:

1. The heart and lungs are stimulated when you laugh.
2. The amount of oxygen in the blood is increased because of deeper breathing.
3. The heart beats faster and blood pressure temporarily rises.
4. With laughing there is exercise of muscles of face, chest and abdomen.
5. Following a good laughter, there is a slight drop of pulse and blood pressure, with relaxation of skeletal muscle producing a feeling of well being and relaxation which lasts about 45 minutes.
6. During laughing there are calories burned, approximately 80 times more than during resting phase.