

## LIFEWATCH BEACON

## WINTER EDITION

**MORE THAN THE 'WINTER BLUES':** What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)? SAD is not just feeling gloomy when the weather is not so good outside. It can be a full-blown depression, but it is predictable for half the year, at the same time of the year, for some people. They know it is coming when they are feeling well the other half of the year. After the sunrise drifts later and later as the winter goes on, the brain sees no light signals in the early morning and the SAD symptoms become increasingly worse as one goes up to the northern U.S. and Canada. The following are some SAD symptoms:

1. Extreme blue mood. 'You feel truly awful about yourself and have unexplained tearful episodes.'
2. Problems getting work done. 'A lack of motivation. Procrastination. Apathy.'
3. Reduced social contact. 'That can be with your family, even important situations and reduced sexual interest.'
4. Change in appetite, carbohydrate or sweets cravings
5. Fatigue. 'It's hard waking up in the morning.'

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, you can call LifeWatch EAP at 1-800-333-6228 to speak to a clinician and discuss the various treatment options that are available.



### FLU SEASON:

**Prevention:** keeping the flu away:

- Get a flu shot
- Keep your distance from people who have the flu
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle: including a good diet, adequate sleep, low stress and drink plenty of water
- Wash hands with soap and water and dry with paper towels
- Avoid second hand cigarette smoke
- Try to quit smoking



**Recognizing the flu in adults:**

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Muscle and joint pain
- Headache
- Fatigue and weakness
- Sore throat

**Recognizing the flu in children 5 years of age and older**

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Nasal inflammation
- Sore throat



**Recognizing the flu in the 50+ population**

- Fever higher than 99 degrees Fahrenheit
- Fatigue and weakness
- Confusion
- Nasal obstruction

A bad case of the flu will probably send a healthy adult or child to bed for 3-5 days. After, the person recovers he/she will cough and feel tired for days or weeks.

### How to brighten the winter blues after the holidays

**Exercise** – try something different besides treadmills and stationary bikes. Try a pilates, yoga, belly dancing, ballroom dancing or salsa class.

**Connect with sunny people** – Do volunteer work. We tend to isolate ourselves in the winter and keep to our homes. Get out and be around positive people or around people who cannot get out or email anyone and will appreciate your visit.

**Simplify your home, room by room** – Clean out your clutter and what you have not used for years. Use this indoors time to organize your home and give it and you that inner glow that you need.

**Try eating more healthy soups and stews** – Add beans and lentils to your diet. These hearty meals are both comforting and nourishing.

**When it is a sunny day, raise the blinds** – Sit by the window and let the sun shine in and gaze or read. A good time to catch up on magazines or books that you never get the chance to read. Feel the warmth.

**Take a class** – Gourmet cooking, knitting, candy making, boating safety, scrap booking, gardening (think spring), or many other short term classes that are offered at local schools or institutions

“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment” *Author: Benjamin Franklin*

**Contact us... LifeWatch Employee Assistance Program**  
**Telephone: 1-800-333-6228**  
**TT/TTY: 1-800-745-5555**  
**website: [www.lifewatch-eap.com](http://www.lifewatch-eap.com)**  
**email: [appointments@gatewayhealth.org](mailto:appointments@gatewayhealth.org)**  
**Remember, help is only a phone call away...**