# Understanding springtime depression and its impact on mood



As the seasons transition from winter to spring, many individuals may find themselves grappling with a lesser-known variation of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) known as springtime depression. This phenomenon, which predominantly affects adults, often takes people by surprise as the longer days and warmer weather arrive.

Natalie Buchwald, a lead psychologist at Manhattan Mental Health Counseling, highlights the reality of springtime depression, noting that it impacts thousands each year. While SAD is typically associated with the gloom of winter, Buchwald explains that the onset of spring can similarly trigger feelings of sadness and low energy in some individuals. This condition often emerges subtly as the environment starts to shift, with a notable impact felt around the time of the seasonal transition leading into summer, just 67 days away from June 21.

Springtime depression is characterised by a range of symptoms, mirroring those of winter SAD, including pervasive feelings of sadness and hopelessness, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, concentration difficulties, fatigue, and changes in appetite. Individuals may also experience social withdrawal, feeling disconnected from others, and may even find themselves sleeping more than usual as their bodies adjust to the seasonal changes. According to Buchwald, the phenomenon can be compounded by social comparisons that arise during the springtime, where seeing others enjoying the warmer weather may exacerbate feelings of inadequacy for those struggling to muster the energy to engage in similar activities. "The pressure to be out and about doing things in the spring, even when you're not feeling it, can leave you feeling even more isolated," she stated.

Additionally, Buchwald draws attention to the impact of seasonal allergies, which can also play a significant role in springtime depression. The increase in pollen during warmer months typically brings discomfort, leading many individuals to spend more time indoors to avoid allergy symptoms. This avoidance can heighten feelings of isolation and contribute to the overall dip in mood. Buchwald remarked, "The earlier onset of allergy season, thanks to climate change, means that many people are forced to spend even more time indoors, missing out on socialising and outdoor activities."

In the face of these challenges, Buchwald offers several strategies to combat the symptoms of springtime depression. She recommends focusing on what she refers to as "the big three": exercise, sleep, and diet. Engaging in regular physical activity, even simple walks outside, can be immensely beneficial in improving mood. Buchwald suggests that it is not only the exposure to sunlight and fresh air that activates positive feelings but also the physical movement itself, which prompts the release of endorphins, known for their mood-enhancing properties.

The importance of maintaining a consistent sleep routine is also emphasised. With longer daylight hours encouraging later bedtimes, it can be essential to prioritise adequate rest to prevent exacerbating feelings of fatigue and sadness. Furthermore, when it comes to dietary choices, Buchwald recommends focusing on anti-inflammatory foods, which can significantly affect both brain function and mood regulation. Incorporating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin C, and dark leafy greens can be advantageous for both physical health and mental well-being.

With spring in full swing, understanding the nuances of springtime depression could be crucial for those who feel affected by the changing seasons. The conversation around this condition continues to grow, drawing attention to the unique challenges some individuals face as they navigate the transition from winter to spring.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.healthline.com/health/spring-depression> - This article supports the idea that spring depression is less well-known but can impact individuals with feelings of sadness and low energy, despite longer days and warmer weather. It also discusses symptoms similar to those of winter SAD, such as sadness and changes in energy.
2. <https://www.healthcentral.com/condition/depression/spring-depression> - This content underscores the existence of spring depression, noting it as a form of reverse SAD, and highlights factors like pollen allergies and daylight saving time as contributors to its onset.
3. <https://www.southuniversity.edu/news-and-blogs/2016/08/spring-can-bring-showers-of-depression-35284> - The article supports the notion that spring can bring depression, contrasting with common views of spring as a time of renewal and joy. It also touches on the contrast between winter and summer patterns of SAD.
4. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder> - While primarily focused on traditional SAD, this resource provides context on seasonal mood disorders and the potential for summer-pattern SAD, which shares some similarities with springtime depression in terms of disrupted sleep patterns and mood changes.
5. <https://mindfulcenter.org/9-common-causes-of-spring-depression/> - This article details causes of spring depression, including allergies and changes in sleep patterns, which align with the factors discussed by Natalie Buchwald. It also explores the stress of social pressures during the spring season.
6. <https://www.noahwire.com> - Unfortunately, this URL was not active or did not provide access to specific content related to springtime depression, so it could not be used for corroboration. Instead, the explanations provided in the article itself highlight the nature of springtime depression and its impacts.
7. <https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/health/psychologist-explains-you-might-feel-31422275> - Please view link - unable to able to access data