Dealing with the Holiday Blues

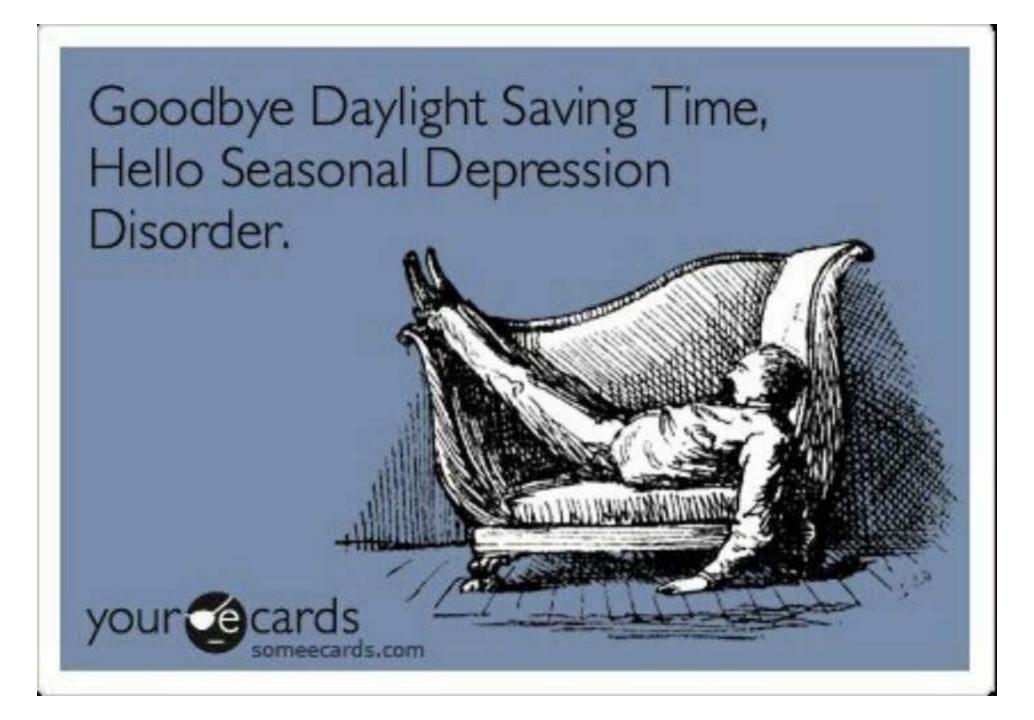
Daniel Leffingwell MS, RN

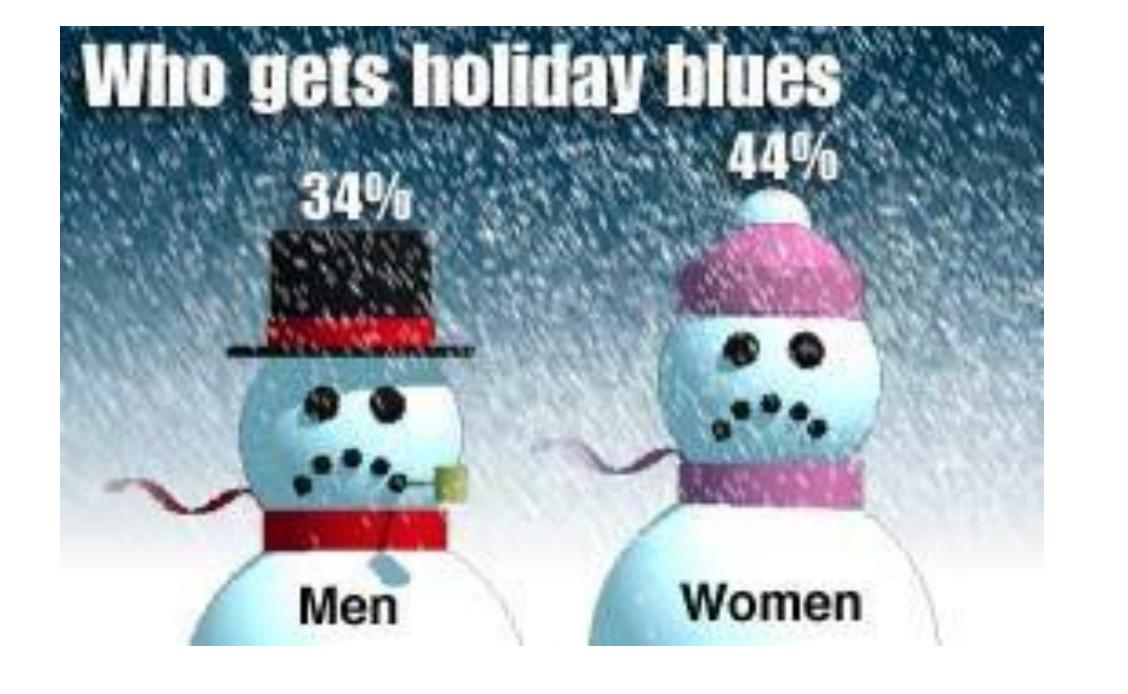


Is it the Blues or Depression?

 No one knows for sure why some people cross the line from simply feeling "blue" to becoming depressed. Some of the most common causes may be a genetic predisposition, physical changes like menopause, a catastrophic life event, a severe illness, or even an adverse drug reaction







Can it be Treated?

• The good news is that depression is highly treatable. Nearly 80 to 90 percent of people with depression will respond well to treatment, according to the <u>National Alliance on Mental Illness</u>. The bad news is that many people suffering from depression do not seek help and consequently do not receive the care they need. ¹

Depression Due to Stress

- Loss of a loved one
- Caregiver stress and burnout
- Loss of physical health
- Loss of Independence

Physical Illness and Medications

- Parkinson's disease
- stroke
- Alzheimer's disease
- thyroid dysfunction
- B-12 deficiency
- Reglan
- beta blockers

Seasonal Affective Disorder

- About 5 percent of adults in the U.S. experience SAD and it typically lasts about 40 percent of the year. It is more common among women than men.³
- Seasonal affective disorder* is a form of depression also known as SAD, seasonal depression or winter depression. People with SAD experience mood changes and symptoms similar to <u>depression</u>.

SAD Facts

- SAD's prevalence in the U.S. ranges from 1.4% in Florida to 9.9% in Alaska.²
- SAD is a type of major depressive disorder ²

Symptoms of Depression

- Loss of interest or pleasure in your family life, hobbies, or sex life
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering things
- Low energy level
- Sleeplessness or sleeping too much

Symptoms of Depression (cont.)

- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Unusual irritability
- Loss of self-esteem or an attitude of indifference
- Frequent or unexplainable crying spells
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

SAD in the Wintertime

- Symptoms of winter SAD often include oversleeping or difficulty waking up in the morning, nausea, and a tendency to over eat, often with a craving for carbohydrates, which leads to weight gain.
- Some suggest a correlation with the loss of sunlight hours during the day.

Treatment of SAD

- Light therapy
- Vitamin D?
- Exercise
- Medication
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Melatonin
- Eat healthy- the role of sugar?
- Social activity

References

- 1. (n.d.). Retrieved November 20, 2017, from https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/seasonal-affective-disorder
- Seasonal affective disorder. (2017, November 09). Retrieved November 20, 2017, from https://en.m.wikipedia..org/wiki/Seasonal affective disorder
- 3. Staff, C. E. (2016, August 24). Senior Blues. Retrieved November 20, 2017, from https://www.caring.com/articles/senior-blues