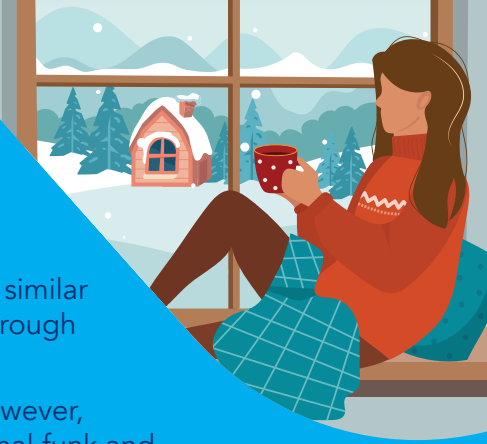


Strategies to support employees navigating Seasonal Affective Disorder






What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)?




SAD is a type of depression related to seasonal changes. Symptoms are similar to those of major depression, but generally begin in the fall, continue through the winter and ease during the spring and summer.¹

Many Canadians experience “winter blues” in the cold, dark months; however, 15% experience SAD each year. SAD is much more serious than a seasonal funk and shouldn't be brushed off.²

Who is at risk?

-  Women more than men³
-  Younger adults; the risk decreases with age³
-  People with a family history of SAD or other forms of depression³

Signs it may be more than the winter blues:

-  Extreme tiredness, low energy or oversleeping⁴
-  Feelings of stress, guilt, sadness or hopelessness most or all of the day, nearly every day⁴
-  Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed⁴

How to support employees navigating SAD:

- Maximize natural light in workspaces to increase vitamin D exposure⁵
- Offer flexible work arrangements and encourage mental health days without stigma
- Implement employee assistance programs (EAPs) that offer counselling resources
- Offer cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) as part your health benefits plan as a validated therapy¹

Access to mental health care is imperative to keep your employees healthy and at work:



1 in 5 Canadians experience a mental illness each year⁶



won't seek treatment, amounting to productivity losses of **\$6 billion** annually⁷



After a six-month absence, there is only a **50% chance** someone will return to work⁸

Co-operators' mental health coverages support employee well-being year-round

We research, pilot and introduce innovative products to address unmet needs and regularly advocate for mental health care initiatives and advancements.

To explore how we help provide your employees with the support they need so they can bring their best selves to work, visit cooperators.ca/group-benefits/mental-health.

References

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