

Your Path Forward

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**SAD Light Therapy and Vitamin D**

Many doctors recommend the use of day-light therapy lamps as the first step in treatment for people suffering symptoms of the ‘winter blues’. Seasonal affective disorder, or SAD, occurs in many people during autumn and winter as exposure to natural daylight is decreased.

When the human body is deprived of too much natural sunlight, it can go through a range of hormonal changes. For example, we need a certain amount of vitamin D from the sun in order to keep our bodies functioning at optimal levels. Likewise, exposure to sunlight also helps the brain to produce serotonin, which is the body’s natural feel-good hormone.

**The Role of Vitamin D in the Body**

Research has shown that patients suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder tend to have low levels of vitamin D within the body. It’s possible to gain some vitamin D from a range of different foods, including egg yolks, fish such as sardines or tuna, or in fish liver oils.

However, your body is capable of producing vitamin D on its own after some exposure to sunlight. It’s only when you aren’t getting enough sunlight that you’re likely to experience symptoms associated with vitamin D deficiency.

Vitamin D is absolutely essential for maintaining strong, healthy bones and reducing the risk of developing osteoarthritis. However, a vitamin D deficiency can also be associated with a range of other health problems. Some of the more common symptoms include depression, anxiety, allergies and glucose intolerance.

Research shows that receptors within your brain can be affected when there are low vitamin D levels in the bloodstream, making it more difficult for your body to produce serotonin. The result is an increase in depression symptoms.

In fact, studies have also shown that people with low vitamin D levels within the blood stream may have an increased risk of developing some very serious health conditions, including type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and asthma.

**SAD Light Treatment vs Vitamin D Supplements**

The major source of vitamin D is exposure to natural sunlight. Yet this isn’t possible for people who aren’t able to get out into natural sunshine regularly. Some people live in locations where the sun may not appear for months at a time. Others may work in occupations that prevent them from getting any sun exposure.

Many people resort to taking synthetic vitamin D supplements to try and correct the deficiency. What they may not realize is that it’s vitally important to ensure you take the right dosages to have the affects you want. If the dosage you take is too low, you won’t notice any benefits. Unfortunately, it is possible to take too much, which could result in vitamin D toxicity that may require medical treatment through sun lamp therapy.

As a result lots of doctors also recommend SAD light boxes for therapeutic purposes. Exposure to light from a SAD light box is known as phototherapy. The lights used are specially designed to filter out most of the UV light, so you aren’t at any risk of eye or skin damage.

Bright light sun lamp therapy has been shown in numerous studies to be of great benefit in treating symptoms Seasonal Affective Disorder. As a bonus, many patients also report a much better quality of sleep, along with a noticeable reduction in depression symptoms.