

# Shorter days and less sunlight can worsen depression

This winter may be especially challenging for those struggling with a mental health or substance use issue.

## Isolation can exacerbate stress

The COVID-19 pandemic has been uniquely stressful. Social distancing can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. In some areas, the colder weather may also reduce opportunities for outside social gatherings that have been helpful for many over the last several months.

## What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

- Depression that comes in a recurring seasonal pattern
- Symptoms can include low energy, sleep problems and changes in appetite
- It is more prevalent in younger ages

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects approximately 10 million Americans each year and commonly arrives with the onset of winter.

It affects more people who have a history of depression in the family and it is four times more common in women.

Source: National Institutes of Health

***Our inpatient, and flexible outpatient programs can help those struggling with a mental health or substance use issue. Telehealth services may also be available.***



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