

HEALTHY AGING

JANUARY 2019

ASK THE EXPERT:

SEASONAL
AFFECTIVE
DISORDER

VITAMINS &
MINERALS
FOR SENIORS

ALMIGHTY
ASPARAGUS

KEEPING SAFE

HOW TO
ENJOY A
HAPPY AND
HEALTHY
WINTER





Is there really such a thing as the winter blues?

MAJOR DEPRESSION SYMPTOMS

- A feeling of depression that lasts nearly all day long, almost daily
- Feelings of agitation, or conversely, lethargy
- Loss of energy
- Loss of interest in formerly enjoyable activities
- Changes in weight or appetite
- Sleeping problems
- Problems with concentration
- Feelings of guilt, hopelessness or worthlessness
- Persistent thoughts of death or even suicide

SYMPTOMS OF WINTER SAD

- Low energy
- Excessive sleeping or sleepiness
- Overeating
- Weight gain
- Carbohydrate cravings
- Withdrawal from social activities

Though SAD's causes aren't known, researchers have found some clues. They theorize that sufferers may have trouble with regulating serotonin, a neurotransmitter involved in mood, or may overproduce melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. Vitamin D insufficiency may play a role in the condition, as well.

People over age 50 have an increased risk of vitamin D deficiency, and the risk increases with age. Older people lose some of their ability to synthesize vitamin D from sunlight, and elders who spend most of their time indoors don't get sufficient sun exposure.

If you suspect you have SAD, there's no need to suffer in silence. Several types of treatment are available, including medication, light therapy, psychotherapy and vitamin D supplementation. Separately or in combination, they may give you some much-needed relief.

(PESS) Unit at MMCSC. "Women, for instance, are diagnosed with it four times more often than men. Living far from the equator can increase your odds of having this condition, as can a family history of SAD. In addition, younger people and those with depression or bipolar disorder are especially vulnerable."

Could you have SAD? For a diagnosis, patients must meet the criteria for major depression, pegged to specific seasons (winter or summer) for a minimum of two years. If the patient has non-seasonal depressions as well, episodes must be much less frequent than seasonal ones.

It's normal to feel a twinge of regret as the trees lose their leaves and the warm weather gives way to icy blasts. But if this yearly shift tends to leave you in a persistent funk, you may suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons.

Typically, SAD starts in late fall and early winter, then retreats in the spring and summer. SAD can also strike as winter turns to spring, or spring becomes early summer, but it's much less common at those times. "Certain people have an elevated risk for SAD," explains Arnold Williams, MD, Director of the Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services

» MMCSC offers comprehensive services for those suffering from all forms of depression, including SAD. For more information please call 732-886-4474.

Staying physically active and socially engaged is important for your body, mind and spirit. MMCSC can help you do both with "Better Health," a free program for older adults that offers members access to free exercise classes, including Tai Chi and yoga; free social activities, ranging from concerts to luncheons; free health screenings and more. To join, call 888-726-2362 or visit rwjhb.org/betterhealth.



8 TIPS FOR SAFE SHOVELING

Simple steps you can take to avoid injury and accidents as you clear snow this winter.

Shoveling snow can be a vigorous activity, placing a great deal of stress on the heart and body. Before the first flakes fall this year, do a little prep to help protect your health and safety. If you have medical concerns or don't exercise regularly, check with your doctor before shoveling or blowing snow—or consider hiring someone to do it for you. Even people who are in good health and reasonably fit can cut their risk of injury by following these tips from Joe McDermott, D.O., of Summit Primary Care.

1 PROPER EQUIPMENT. Use a shovel that's comfortable for your height and strength. Space your hands on the tool grip to increase your leverage.

2 HELP YOUR MUSCLES. Before you begin, stretch and warm up your muscles with light exercise for 10 minutes. When you're done shoveling, stretch again.

3 PACE YOURSELF. Take frequent breaks and prevent dehydration by drinking plenty of water. If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, or other signs of a heart attack, stop the activity and seek emergency care.

4 LIFT PROPERLY. Try to push the snow instead of lifting it. If you must lift, do it properly. Squat with your legs apart, knees bent, and back straight. Lift with your legs. Do not bend at the waist. Scoop small amounts of snow into the shovel and walk to where you want to dump it. Don't overload your shovel—this is particularly important in the case of heavy, wet snow.

5 USE SAFE TECHNIQUE. Don't throw shovel loads of snow over your shoulder or to the side. This requires a twisting motion that stresses your back.

6 DRESS APPROPRIATELY. Light, layered, water-repellent clothing provides both ventilation and insulation. It's also important to wear the appropriate head covering and thick, warm socks. Choose gloves or mittens that will keep your hands warm, dry, and blister-free. Avoid falls by wearing shoes or boots that have slip-resistant soles.

7 START EARLY. Try to clear snow early and often—particularly if a large snowfall is expected. It will give you the best chance possible to avoid the injuries that can come with moving packed, heavy snow.

8 PRESERVE YOUR VIEW. Be sure that you can fully see the area that you are clearing. Adjust your hat or scarf so it doesn't block your vision. Watch for ice patches and uneven surfaces.

WATCH FOR SIGNS OF FROSTBITE

Frostbite is most common on the fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks and chin. Because of skin numbness, you may not realize you have frostbite until someone else points it out. Signs and symptoms of frostbite include:

- Cold skin and a prickling feeling
 - Numbness
 - Red, white, bluish-white, or grayish-yellow skin
 - Hard or waxy-looking skin
 - Clumsiness due to joint and muscle stiffness
 - Blistering after rewarming
- Seek medical attention if you experience:
- White or pale skin, numbness, or blisters
 - Increased pain, swelling, redness, or discharge in the frostbitten area
 - Fever
 - New, unexplained symptoms

Necessary Nutrients for Healthy Aging

These vitamins and minerals can help seniors stay healthy and active.

As we age and our bodies change, so, too, do our nutritional needs. The one-size-fits-all multivitamin you might have been taking for much of your life may no longer be supplying an adequate dose of some vitamins and minerals, while giving you more than you now need of others.

“While supplements are no substitute for eating nutritious food, sometimes the nutrients you receive from diet alone may not be enough,” says Lauren Dorman, Registered Dietician and Diabetes Educator for Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC). “This is especially true as we age. Always consult your doctor and pharmacist before taking any vitamin or mineral supplements, as they may interact with medications you’re taking.”

According to the National Institute on Aging, a division of the National Institutes of Health, an adequate intake of the following vitamins and minerals is essential to maintaining good health in people age 50 and older.

VITAMIN B6

Why you need it: B6 is essential for the brain and is needed to maintain healthy nervous and immune systems. It helps the body produce another important B vitamin, niacin, and the neurotransmitter serotonin. It also helps to regulate blood sugar levels. Those with kidney disease may have a higher risk for B6 deficiency.

Recommended dose: Men need 1.7 mg every day. Women need 1.5 mg every day.

Get it naturally: You can get vitamin B6 from fortified cereals, whole grains, organ meats like liver, poultry, chickpeas, bananas

and fortified soy-based meat substitutes.

VITAMIN B12

Why you need it: B12 is vital for manufacturing red blood cells and DNA, and for maintaining healthy nerve cells.

Recommended dose: Men and women need 2.4 mcg every day. Some people over age 50 have trouble absorbing the B12 found naturally in foods, so even if your diet contains enough, ask your doctor whether you should take it in supplement form.

Get it naturally: You can get B12 from fortified cereals, meat, fish, poultry and milk.

VITAMIN D

Why you need it: Vitamin D helps maintain bone strength and density and helps to protect you from chronic diseases, including multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis and autoimmune diseases. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to increased risk of falling and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). The body produces its own vitamin D from exposure to sunlight. As older people tend to be less active outdoors, their risk for deficiency increases significantly.

Recommended dose: People age 50 to 70 need at least 600 IU, but not more than 4,000 IU daily. People age 70 and above need at least 800 IU, but not more than 4,000 IU.

Get it naturally: You can get vitamin D from fatty fish, fish-liver oils, fortified cereals, and fortified milk and milk products.

CALCIUM

Why you need it: Although this mineral is most closely associated

with strong bones and teeth, calcium plays many other roles in the body. People tend to consume less of it through their diet as they get older. If your body doesn't get the calcium it needs from outside sources, it will “steal” it from your bones, causing brittleness and fragility.

Recommended dose: Women 51 and older should consume 1,200 mg daily; men 51 to 70 1,000 mg daily, and men 71 and older 1,200 mg daily.

Get it naturally: You can get calcium from milk and dairy products, tofu, dark green vegetables (especially kale and broccoli), soybeans, canned fish (especially sardines and salmon), and calcium-fortified foods. The body uses calcium and protein together for bone health, so consuming calcium naturally through your diet works best.

FOLATE

Why you need it: Folate helps prevent high levels of homocysteine, an amino acid carried in the blood that's linked to heart disease. It's also used in the production of proteins used to build, maintain and repair healthy tissue, and may help the body protect itself from certain forms of cancer.

Recommended dose: Men and women need 400 mcg daily.

Get it naturally: You can get folate from dark green leafy vegetables (especially spinach), beans, peas, oranges and orange juice. While folate is found naturally, folic acid is the form used to fortify grain products like flour and cereals and the form added to dietary supplements.

OTHER NOTABLE NUTRIENTS

- Potassium is crucial for healthy cell functioning, bone strength and healthy blood pressure, among other things. But many seniors don't consume the recommended 4,700 mg daily. Fruits and vegetables are the best dietary sources of potassium, especially bananas, plums, prunes and the skins of potatoes. Too much potassium could be dangerous, so consult with your doctor before taking any potassium supplements.
- Magnesium is a key “helper” in a variety of areas, from your immune system and heart to your bones. Bodies absorb less magnesium as they age. Unfortunately, magnesium gets removed from foods during processing, making it an even greater challenge to get enough. The recommended daily allowance for men over age 50 is 420 mg, and for women over 50 it's 320 mg. Rich, sources include fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, beans and seeds.



Almighty ASPARAGUS

Loaded with nutrients, these spirited spears are packed with powerful health benefits.

This springtime green vegetable is tender, tasty, easy to prepare and packed with nutritional benefits. So maybe it's time to make these succulent stalks a menu regular.

POWER UP

Asparagus helps the heart in several ways. It's rich in fiber, which can reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, and full of inflammation-fighting antioxidants. It also packs plenty of B vitamins, which help regulate the amino acid homocysteine, high levels of which can be a danger to your arteries. What's more, one ½-cup serving of this powerhouse vegetable provides 57 percent of your daily requirement of vitamin K (which helps blood clotting and strengthens bones), and 34 percent of the daily requirement for folate (needed to produce DNA and to help the body's cells divide properly). Asparagus also contains a type of soluble fiber that helps us absorb nutrients by supporting the colon's probiotic bacteria. You get all that—and distinctive taste too—for only 20 calories!

BUY | STORE | SERVE

Choose stalks that are round and neither fat nor twisted. The stems should be firm and thin with deep green or purplish closed tips. To store your spears, wrap a damp paper towel or cloth around the ends and place in your fridge. Try to consume asparagus within 48 hours of purchase, when it's at its best both in taste and nutritional value. Pre-cooking prep is minimal. Use a vegetable peeler to remove the outer skin of the stem's thicker bottom portion, which tends to be tough and stringy. Don't cut the tips off! Wash asparagus under cold water to remove any grit and then cook stalks whole to maintain nutrients. Serve asparagus as a side dish by sautéing in your choice of vegetable broth, chicken broth or olive oil, or by roasting in the oven, lightly sprinkled with Parmesan cheese. In the mood for a breakfast with a difference? Asparagus makes a flavorful addition to any omelet. Or liven up that lunchtime salad by chopping up asparagus spears—raw or cooked—and tossing them into the mix.

24

Growth rate:
up to 10 inches in
24 hours.

3

Time from
seed to harvest:
3 years.

15-20

A perennial vegetable
that produces for
15-20 years.

20

Of 300 varieties,
only 20
are edible.



Community Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are free, held at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (600 River Avenue, Lakewood) and require advance registration by calling 888-724-7123.

Tai Chi for Beginners (Better Health Members ONLY)

Thursdays, through Jan. 31,
1 to 2 p.m.

Get a head start on your "Healthy New Year" with Tai Chi! Free for Better Health Members who are new to Tai Chi. Led by expert instructor Kit Lau, Tai Chi can improve balance, coordination and lower body strength. 3rd Floor Conference Room.

Healthy New Year! A Better Health Member-Only Mini-Conference

Thu, Jan. 10, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Let's make health and wellness a priority in 2019! Join us for an afternoon of inspiring lectures from a variety of presenters including organizing humorist, Jaime Novak, author of "Keep This Toss That: Unclutter Your Life to Save Time, Money Space and Sanity"; Owner and operator of Coastline Pilates, Renee Millemann; and Abhijit Chatterjee, MD, Geriatrics. Lite

bites will be served. 3rd Floor Conference Room.

Sticking to Your Resolutions Mon, Jan. 14, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Does your list of resolutions for 2019 look oddly similar to the list that you made for 2018 and for 2017? Join us as we encourage one another and discuss making and setting realistic health goals for 2019, as well as how to stay motivated throughout the year! A light lunch will be served. 3rd Floor Conference Room.

West Africa on the East Coast Tue, Feb. 19, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Explore the cultural tapestry of West Africa through centuries of art from within its 18 present-day countries. Included will be sculpture, beadwork, metalwork and ivories from local museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Princeton University Art Museum and the Newark Museum. Conference Room ABC.

SCREENINGS

Lung and Vascular Screenings

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus has joined Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch in offering and promoting low-dose CT scan lung screening as part of the MMC/MMCSC Lung Cancer Screening Program in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. Additionally, The Vascular Institute at MMCSC offers convenient, noninvasive self-pay vascular screenings to at-risk men and women over age 55. Results from both screenings are sent to your primary care physician. Both the lung and vascular screenings will support community health needs through education, early detection and prevention. For more information on the Lung Screening Program, call 732-923-7966. To schedule a vascular screening, call 888-724-7123.

» Diabetes self-management classes are offered on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon at MMCSC. A prescription for diabetes education and nutritional counseling from your physician is required. The fee for this service is often covered by insurance and Medicare. All sessions are held at The Center for Healthy Living, located at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus, 198 Prospect Street in Lakewood. Registration is required. Call 732-886-4731.

