



Did You Know?

February 2016

Suffering from the winter blues? Although this Western New York winter hasn't hit us nearly as hard as it did last year, it is still possible to be feeling a little down. Winter blues can also be known as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD.

Wondering if you might be experiencing SAD? Symptoms can include apathy, irritability, less energy, fatigue, boredom, overeating and/or weight gain, and sleeping too much. The good news is that spring is on the horizon and SAD tends to dissipate as the sun makes more of an appearance. Once the spring and summer months come around, your SAD symptoms should diminish.

- A drop in Serotonin levels, a brain chemical that affects mood, could be a factor in causing SAD.
- A decrease in the body's melatonin level can also increase the symptoms of SAD.
- Approximately 20 million Americans suffer from SAD.
- SAD is more common in women than men.

What Can You Do?

- Expose yourself to daylight. Open the curtains or blinds and sit close to the window while at home or in the office.
- If you can't get exposure to natural sunlight, invest in a sun lamp. Take just a few minutes each day to read, or just sit by the lamp, and reap those bright light benefits.
- Take advantage of any nice weather that is making an early appearance to get outside and go for a walk.
- Once the nice weather is here to stay, get outside and be active. Grab a friend, get the family together, or leash up your dog and go for a walk or leisurely bike ride.
- **OR participate in our upcoming charity event, a 5k fun run: Color Me Rad.**

A promotional poster for the "Color Me Rad" event in Buffalo. The top left shows a crowd of people with colorful powder being thrown. The word "BUFFALO" is written in large, multi-colored letters. Below this, the text "DARE TO BE RAD" and "May 14, 2016" is displayed in bold, colorful fonts. The location "Darlen Lake Amusement Park" is listed below. A dashed box contains the text "Use promo code BUFFALO to receive 10% off". At the bottom, it says "Register at www.ColorMeRad.com". The Erie County Council logo is in the bottom left corner.

Sources: www.psychologytoday.com and www.mayoclinic.org

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The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.eccpasa.org