



BalanceWorks® Newsletter

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Summer Depression

Summer is in full swing and everyone seems to be having a great time enjoying the beach, pool, and warm weather. Contrary to popular belief, some people actually experience depression each year when summer hits. Summer depression can have a biological cause or the stressors of the season can pile up leading people to feel anxious and depressed.

Let's take a look at a few of the causes of summertime depression:

Summertime SAD

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a well documented disorder, but is most prevalent and associated with the winter months as the days get shorter and colder. However, about 10% of people who suffer from SAD actually experience the reverse and the onset of summer actually triggers their depression symptoms. Symptoms of summer SAD often include loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, weight loss, and anxiety.

Great Expectations

Summer is often hailed as the season when people have the most fun and are the most relaxed. We are

inundated with constant vacation updates and pictures of our friends having epic surfing adventures or just lounging by the pool with a cocktail. When summer does not live up to expectations, either your own or society's, you may begin to feel like you are missing out, which can lead to sadness and ultimately mild depression.

The Heat

Summer is H-O-T! In some regions of the country like the southeast, the heat and humidity can become unbearable. There are many people who love the heat, but for others, the extreme temperatures can be too much. Many people who cannot stand the heat, end up avoiding outdoor activities and instead hide out inside in the air conditioning binge watching their favorite TV shows. Things like skipping your normal workout, avoiding outdoor activities with friends, or ordering lots of takeout because it's too hot to cook can all add to summertime depression.

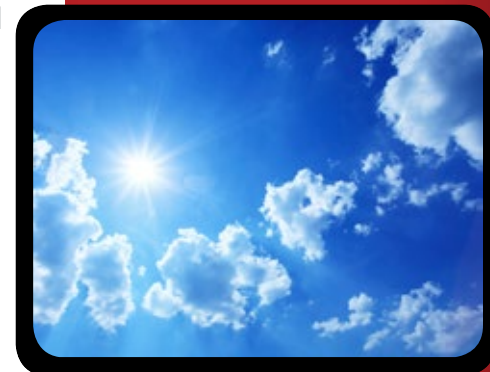
Schedule Disruptions

Having a set schedule and reliable routine is important for staving

For more information or support on summer depression, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks® by calling:

1.800.327.2255

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off depression symptoms. During the summer, our normally scheduled program is often disrupted, which can be extremely stressful. The kids are out of school, you're planning for a week-long vacation, and two mini weekend trips to the beach, your brother and his kids are coming to visit for three days, your co-workers want to hit up happy hour twice a week to celebrate the longer days, etc. The summer brings endless opportunities for your routine to be disrupted.

Lack of Sleep

Not getting enough sleep is a trigger for depression. Vacations, summer BBQs, and numerous holiday parties can leave you exhausted. In addition, the longer days can encourage you to stay up later than usual.

Financial Stressors

Money woes often contribute to feelings of depression and summer can be expensive. If you are a working parent, you may have to pay for summer programs for your kids to attend during the day. Regardless of where and how you travel, vacations also end up being very costly. Between plane tickets, the hotel, eating every meal out, theme park tickets, buying new clothes, spa treatments, etc the costs really add up!

Coping with Summer Depression

There are many simple steps you can take to help you cope with summertime depression.

Seek Help

Regardless of the time of year, if you experience depression symptoms, talk to a therapist who can tailor a treatment plan for you. There is no need to suffer through the summer in misery. It is also important

to treat seasonal depression to prevent it from turning into a longer lasting bout of major depression.

Plan Ahead

If you notice that you always feel depressed during the summer plan ahead to avoid your triggers. Revise your schedule to fit your summer routine. If you are sensitive to the heat, plan fun activities that are indoors but that get you out of the house like visiting an aquarium or museum. If you are planning on going on vacation try to save up throughout the year so you are not dealing with all the added expenses all at once. Finally, temper your expectations. If you expect to have "the best summer ever" every year, you will surely be disappointed. Live in the moment and enjoy the simple pleasures that come with the season.

Focus on Your Health

Keeping yourself healthy will also help alleviate depression symptoms. Get plenty of rest, eat whole foods packed with nutrients, complete some form of exercise daily – even a 15 minute walk can boost your mood, take time for yourself, and stay hydrated.

If you are experiencing summer depression, contact eni today to schedule a free and completely confidential appointment with an experienced behavioral health professional who can help!

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