Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that usually begins during late fall and lasts through the winter months when there is less natural sunlight.

Symptoms may include:
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Increased sleep and fatigue
- Irritability
- Moodiness
- Social withdrawal
- Diminished concentration
- Increased appetite with weight gain

It is important to contact a healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment of SAD and other types of depression.

If you think that you or someone you know is depressed, please contact Student Counseling Services for a confidential consultation at (773) 702-9800.

Additional Ways You Can Help Decrease SAD Symptoms:

Soak up some sun outside
Bundle up and spend at least 30 minutes outdoors within two hours of getting up in the morning.
Even on cloudy days, being outside can help decrease the effects of SAD.

Rise and shine
Keeping a regular schedule and getting 7 to 9 hours of sleep at night can give you more energy, counteracting the effects of SAD.

Eat seasonal foods
Many nutrients that our bodies lack in the winter, such as calcium and vitamins C, B, D, and A can be found in seasonal foods. If you’re experiencing SAD symptoms you may want to stick to brightly colored veggies and fruit, like apples, squash, and carrots, as well as whole grains and complex carbs.

Exercise
Moving your body at least 30 minutes a day is another great way to avoid SAD symptoms. The Department of Physical Education and Athletics offers a variety of opportunities to be active, including IM sports, group exercise classes, and two work out facilities: the Gerald Ratner Athletics Center and Henry Crown Field House.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects 1/2 million people every winter.

One of the best ways to decrease SAD symptoms, which include depression and anxiety, is to spend more time in the sun.

This map represents a few “sunny spots” for you to visit on campus to help minimize and control your SAD. Remember to be respectful when utilizing public spaces.
Tell us your favorite sunny spot at wellness.uchicago.edu!