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Is Seasonal Affective Disorder Real?

Not according to a recently published study. At least, that's what the headlines about the study suggested. While not exactly using these words, a group of psychologists said, "We've proven that SAD is just a big scam so that pharmaceutical companies can sell more drugs. It has no place in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. It's folklore and should be removed!"

There is a whole lot in those statements, and I'll break down this study this week to see if what they said is real or not. To me, SAD is real based on my experience with people who've had it. But I'm going to try to avoid any bias on my account, something the researchers who conducted the study didn't seem to do. I'll give you the facts on the study. You can decide for yourself what you believe.

Let's begin by defining SAD: seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons—SAD begins and ends at about the same times every year. For most people with SAD, the symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months. The symptoms sap people's energy and make them feel moody. One important note is that SAD can happen during the spring or summer as well, which may seem odd when we think we know the reasons it occurs.



But do we? We'll check out the study on Thursday.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: [Clinical Psychological Science. 2016. doi:10.1177/2167702615615867](https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702615615867)

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