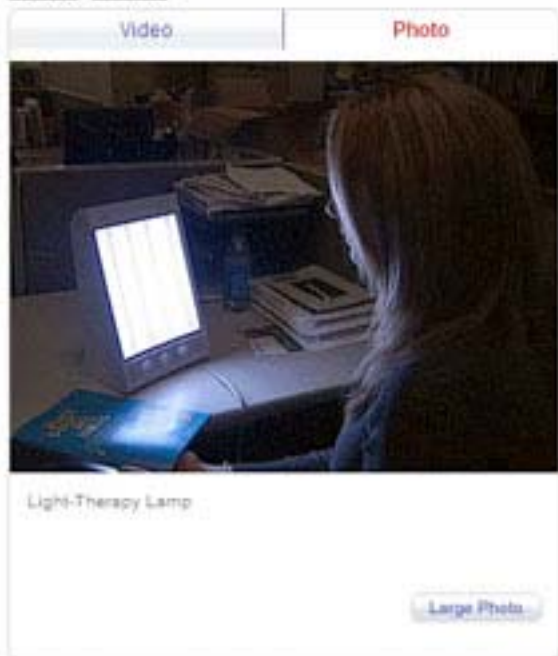


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Light Therapy for Seasonal Affective Disorder

Updated: Wednesday, 16 Dec 2009, 6:34 PM EST

Published : Wednesday, 16 Dec 2009, 4:55 PM EST

By DONNA SWEENEY / Fox 5 News

MYFOXNY.COM - For some people autumn is the best time of the year, but for others it is a reminder of the long months ahead when the sunlight disappears before some even get out of work.

And some people even get hit with a condition called seasonal affective disorder, also known as S.A.D. It usually strikes in the [winter](#) and is more common in northern regions, where the season is typically longer and harsher.

"Mood symptoms can consist of anything like sluggishness, low energy, lack of interest, [sleep disruption](#), some people will obviously get sad around that time," says Dr. Vatsal Thakkar, a psychiatrist at NYU Langone Medical Center. "The darkening of the days affects our hormonal cycles... melanin and growth hormone and thyroid hormone are all affected."

An estimated half million people in the United States suffer from seasonal affective disorder, and many of them don't even know it.

"The level of functioning is not greatly affected--meaning people still make it out of bed, make it to work, maintain their lives albeit with extra difficulty or extra work," Dr. Vatsal Thakkar says.

He says bringing awareness can help because there are some very effective treatments that you can do on your own, such as exercise and spending time under light-therapy lamps. The lamps mimic natural outdoor light.

Dr. Thakkar says that if symptoms are more severe, you should seek professional help.

For more information on where to find the light-therapy lamps, see:

- [NATUREBRIGHT.COM](#)

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