

Frequently Asked Questions about Seasonal Affective Disorder and Light Deprivation

Q. What is Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD?

A. Seasonal Affective Disorder is a name given to a collection of symptoms that mimic those of depression. I say 'mimic', because, while depression has many sources, SAD has only one, a reduction of exposure to light below the minimum needed to be symptom-free. A pop-up list of symptoms is found on the right-hand side of the lower menu bar of any page on <http://ldima.com>, hover the mouse over 'Symptom Check'.

Q. How is 'light deprivation' different from Seasonal Affective Disorder?

A. When 'light deprivation' occurs for an extended period of time, the individual is said to have Seasonal Affective Disorder. This implies that there is something 'disorderly' or 'wrong' with one having symptoms. 'Light deprivation' is much closer to the truth and removes any stigma, reducing SAD to a temporary condition that can be dealt with effectively. Calling it 'light deprivation' restores dignity and empowers one to overcome the condition. Sometimes, the conditioning is so deep that an equally deep reconditioning is required. Guided imagery, when combined with light therapy accomplishes this effortlessly. The awareness that a reduction in light is the source and that this reduction has natural effects, once recognized as such, help dissolve the conditioning. Light deprivation can occur at any time during the year.

Q. Do I have to use guided imagery?

A. No. My experience has been that the reward from using guided imagery coincident with light therapy exceeds that from using either alone.

Q. Why do you stress keeping the eyes closed?

A. Guided imagery is done with eyes closed. The furthest distance at which a 10,000 lux dose can be measured is within a foot of most lightboxes. I find light therapy works with eyes closed when you are within the margins of the 10,000 lux zone. If your lightbox emits UV and you have concerns, please wear sunscreen. Exposure to ultraviolet light has health benefits. See the link to [UV or no UV?](#) on the page [Feel Better Now](#) and decide for yourself.

Q. How do I get started?

A. You'll need a lightbox and a quality recording to listen to. I use a Sun-a-Lux Combo. Please do your own investigation. Not everyone wants one that emits UV (w/Sun-a-lux, UV can be turned off.) You'll find a link to a free guided imagery recording that can be played online or downloaded on the page [Feel Better Now](#), I encourage you to find one that resonates well with you. Need more light therapy? Try an LED dawn simulator.

[Feel Better Now](#) has links to help determine the length of light therapy sessions. There are links that support the view of SAD as 'light deprivation' and about health in general. The [SAD In The News](#) page links to articles of interest in reverse chronological order and to an RSS feed.

Raising the level of consciousness of those who have, or suspect they may be susceptible to SAD is the goal. Your health and happiness matters most. Change your thoughts and you change your life.

Be well...

Larry