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27 Home Remedies for Seasonal Affective Disorder

by [the Editors of Consumer Guide](#)

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Natural Home Remedies for Seasonal Affective Disorder

Doctors often treat SAD with antidepressants. For some, they work. For others, the side effects are overwhelming, often worse than the SAD itself. So if you've got SAD, look in the kitchen for some home remedy relief.

Home Remedies from the Cupboard

Basmati rice. The sugar in this rice is slow to release into the bloodstream, which helps blood sugar levels stay constant instead of going through highs and lows. Drastic changes in blood sugar can lead to weight gain, which is a side effect of SAD. Other foods with a similar effect on blood sugar are rye bread and pasta.

Bouillon. When the carbohydrate craving is just about to defeat you, drink some hot bouillon or broth. Hot liquids in the belly are filling, and consuming them before a meal is an old diet trick that reduces food consumption. Better the bouillon than the banana cream pie.

Cereals. Cooked cereal, unsweetened muesli, and bran flakes are slow to release sugar into the bloodstream, which helps raise serotonin levels.

Herbal teas. Any herbal tea is a better choice than teas with caffeine. Your reduced energy level may cause you to turn to caffeine for a boost, but it can also cause anxiety, muscle tension, and stomach problems, so opt for herbal. Chamomile, peppermint, and cinnamon are pleasant-tasting choices. Drink a cup instead of giving in to your carbohydrate cravings.



©2007 Publications International, Ltd. Cooked cereals, such as oatmeal, release sugar slowly into the bloodstream, helping to regulate serotonin levels.

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Home Remedies from the Refrigerator

Apricots. This fruit gradually raises serotonin levels and helps keep them there, as do apples, pears, grapes, plums, grapefruits, and oranges.

Avocados. They are high in natural serotonin, which seems to suppress appetite. Also high in natural serotonin are dates, bananas, plums, eggplant, papayas, passion fruit, plantains, pineapples, and tomatoes.

Cottage cheese. It's high in tryptophan, which is lacking in people with SAD. Other foods just as high in tryptophan are turkey, fish, and eggs.

Legumes. These help maintain an even serotonin level throughout the day and night. Eat some beans, peas, lentils, or peanuts.

Shellfish. These are high in tyrosine, which forms chemicals that act on the brain cells to improve concentration and alertness, both of which become sluggish with SAD. Other foods high in tyrosine are fish, chicken, skinless turkey, cottage cheese, plain yogurt, skim milk, eggs, tofu, and very lean ham, pork, and lamb.

Turkey. Protein foods such as turkey, low-fat cottage cheese, chicken, and low fat dairy products can reduce the carbohydrate cravings of SAD as well as control the weight gain that occurs during SAD months.

Home Remedies from the Spice Rack

Peppermint oil. Or lemon oil. Steep in water and inhale. These are stimulating and may give you a little extra zip.

Home Remedies from the Window

Curtains. Open them, or remove them, especially if your kitchen window has a southern exposure.

Dirty dishes. If your sink is near or under the window, save all your dishes from the night before and wash them the next day, during the brightest sunlight.

Preparations. Make your meal preparations in the brightest light of the day, in front of the kitchen window.

Whatever method you choose to help deal with SAD, if the situation worsens, make sure to seek out the advice of a health professional. However, for a somewhat mild case of the winter blues, simple home remedies like increased sunlight, certain foods and a good old-fashioned vacation can do wonders.

Everyday Solutions

- **Take a walk in the sun.** Morning or early afternoon sun is the best.
- **Cut trees and bushes away from your windows.** Remove heavy drapes that block the light.
- **Lighten your home.** Use light-colored fabrics, walls, and rugs.
- **Add more light to your home or office.** Try natural

full-spectrum lighting.

- **Exercise.** Aerobic exercise has a positive effect on moods. Try walking, jogging, biking, swimming. Even better, exercise in the sun or near a sunny window.
- **Vacation in a warm, sunny climate.** Take a trip during the winter months, whenever possible.

Other natural, home remedies exist for mood ailments. For more information on lifestyle alterations and home remedies, check out:

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- To see all of our home remedies and the conditions they treat, go to our main [Home Remedies](#) page.
- Read about natural ways to treat depression in our [Home Remedies for Depression](#) section.
- Understand what causes stress and how it affects the human body in [How Stress Works](#).
- Learn how to destress with simple home remedies by reading [Home Remedies for Stress](#).
- Want to know how depression is caused -- and what effects it causes? Check out the [How Depression Works](#) section.

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