



SAFETY TALK

Beating the Winter Blues

Good mental health is an all-year endeavor, but it can be especially challenging in the cold, dark months of winter. A combination of social and environmental factors can lead to lower mood that is commonly referred to as the “winter blues”. This week’s safety talk has some information about common signs and symptoms and a few tips to try and boost your mood while we wait for spring.

Why does it happen?

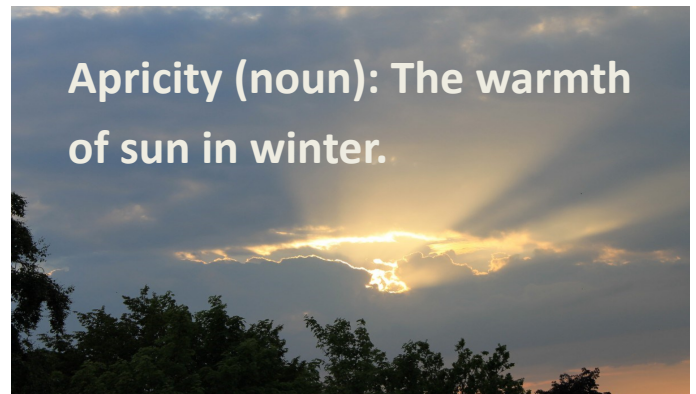
When the days get shorter, so does our exposure to sunlight. This reduces the amount of Vitamin D produced naturally in our body. Early sunset also signals our body to begin producing melatonin sooner in the day, which impacts our sleep cycle and energy levels.

Winter weather can also disrupt our routines and make it more difficult to engage in activities or pastimes that we enjoy. Cold, icy conditions can prevent us from enjoying outdoor activities and deter us from getting together with friends and family.

Sources: John Hopkins Medicine, American Psychiatric Association

Common Signs and Symptoms

- Feeling sad or depressed mood
- Loss of pleasure in usual activities
- Changes in appetite (usually craving carbohydrates)
- Feeling tired or fatigued, regardless of increased sleep hours
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions



Tips for Boosting Your Mood

- ⇒ Find sunlight in peak hours (10:30am—2pm) with a walk outside or look for a bright window to eat your lunch, especially if you arrive and leave work during dark hours.
- ⇒ Many people are less physically active in the winter. Check out indoor options like a walking track or pool for some good exercise, or explore a new winter sport!
- ⇒ Try to avoid blue lights from cell phones, television and computers in the evening to avoid confusing the part of your brain that produces melatonin

Safety is everyone's responsibility!

DATE: October 4, 2023
FACILITY: QEH

SAFETY TALK LEAD BY: _____
DEPARTMENT: _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES I CAN DO TO BEAT THE WINTER BLUES?

WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I AM STRUGGLING WITH THE WINTER BLUES?

ARE THERE ANY CHANGES TO MY ROUTINE I CAN IMPLEMENT TO HELP BEAT THE WINTER BLUES?

EMPLOYEE CONCERNS & IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

FOLLOW UP ON CONCERNS:

If you have any feedback on the Safety Talks program or a suggestion for a Safety Talk, please contact a member of the Wellness & Safety Team or email healthpeihr@ihis.org.

Safety Talks can be found on the Staff Resource Centre at: <https://src.healthpei.ca/safety-talks>