Wellness Wednesday

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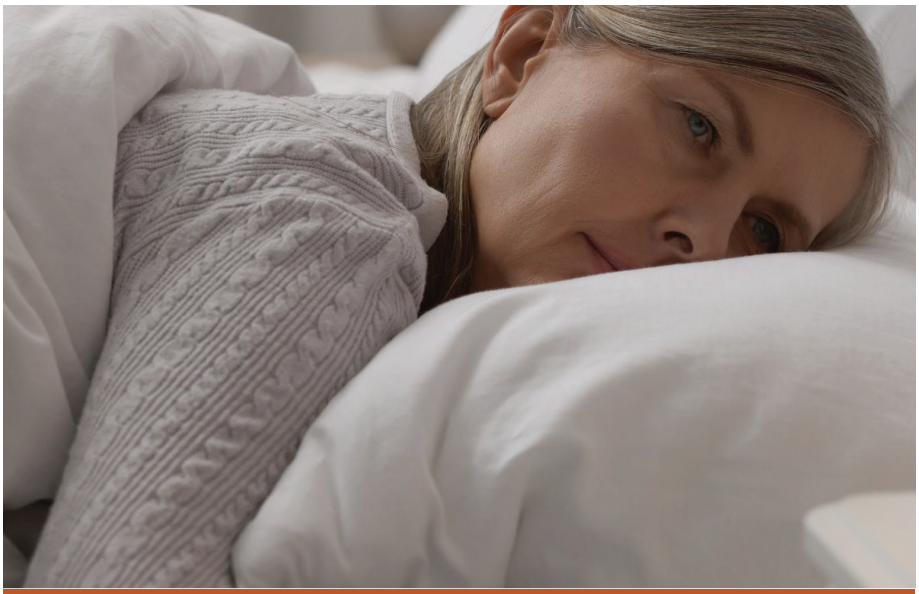
When Summer Feels Heavy: Understanding Reverse SAD

While many people look forward to sunshine and longer days, others feel drained, anxious, or down. This could be Reverse Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)—a lesser-known condition that affects some during the summer months.

What to Watch For

Reverse SAD can show up in different ways. Common signs include:



- Sleep troubles – You may have a hard time falling or staying asleep.
- Low appetite or food cravings – Eating less or craving comfort foods is common.
- Mood swings – You might feel more anxious, irritable, or overwhelmed.
- Social withdrawal – The pressure to enjoy outdoor fun can feel exhausting.
- Discomfort with heat – Hot, humid weather can make everything feel harder.

What Causes It?

Several factors can trigger summer depression:

- Disrupted body clock – Longer daylight hours can throw off your sleep and energy patterns.
- Environmental stress – Summer often brings extra costs, childcare demands, and body image pressure.
- Loss of routine – Without structure, especially when kids are out of school, days can feel chaotic or isolating.

Ways to Cope

The good news? There are simple strategies that can make a big difference:

- Cool your space – Use fans or AC to stay comfortable and reduce heat-related stress.
- Create a routine – A regular schedule helps stabilize mood and energy.
- Limit light exposure – Try blackout curtains or an eye mask to improve sleep.
- Enjoy indoor activities – Crafts, games, or quiet hobbies can be a refreshing break.
- Talk it out – Therapy, especially Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), can help manage symptoms.

Be Kind to Yourself

You don't have to love summer to be okay. Give yourself permission to feel how you feel—without guilt or comparison.

- Acknowledge your experience – Reverse SAD is real, and your feelings are valid.
- Prioritize rest and comfort – Choose slower-paced days, restful sleep, and nourishing meals.
- Protect your peace – It's okay to say no to plans that don't serve your well-being.
- Surround yourself with support – Whether it's a friend, family member, or therapist, connect with someone who gets it.
- Practice compassion – Talk to yourself the way you would a friend going through a tough time.

You're Not Alone

Reverse Seasonal Affective Disorder affects more people than you might think—but help is available. Recognizing your symptoms is the first step. With the right tools and support, you can feel better and more grounded—even in the brightest months of the year.

There's no such thing as the "right" way to do summer. Let yours be exactly what feels good for you!

Watermelon Caprese Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 red seedless watermelon, sliced 1/2 inch thick (calculated with 16 oz)
- 8 thin slices fresh mozzarella, 1 oz each
- 1 loose cup baby arugula
- 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- kosher salt
- 2 tbsp balsamic glaze

Pairing Suggestions

This salad pairs beautifully with a variety of dishes, making it a versatile addition to your summer menu. Consider serving it alongside:

- Grilled chicken or shrimp for a complete meal.
- A light pasta dish with lemon and herbs.
- A selection of charcuterie and cheeses for a delightful appetizer spread.

When the heat is on, our appetites lean toward crisp, cool, and colorful. Enter the Watermelon Caprese Salad—a refreshing remix of the Italian favorite. Swapping out tomatoes for juicy watermelon, this dish layers creamy mozzarella, peppery arugula, and a drizzle of tangy balsamic glaze for a flavor-packed bite that screams summer. It's light, vibrant, and perfect for picnics, cookouts, or any sunny day on your calendar.

A Must-Try Summer Dish

The Watermelon Caprese Salad is a delightful and refreshing dish that embodies the essence of summer. Its vibrant colors, contrasting flavors, and ease of preparation make it a perfect choice for picnics, barbecues, or casual gatherings. Whether you stick to the classic recipe or experiment with variations, this salad is sure to impress your guests and become a staple in your summer repertoire.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 salad, Calories: 119 kcal, Carbohydrates: 7 g, Protein: 5.5 g, Fat: 7.5 g, Cholesterol: 20 mg, Sodium: 90 mg, Fiber: 0.5 g, Sugar: 6.5 g



INSTRUCTIONS

How to Make It

1. **Slice the Watermelon:** Cut the watermelon into thick slices, about half an inch thick. Use a cookie cutter to create fun shapes, such as stars or circles, for a festive touch.

2. **Layer the Ingredients:** On a serving platter, alternate layers of watermelon and mozzarella. Add a handful of arugula between the layers for added texture and flavor.

3. **Drizzle with Olive Oil:** Lightly drizzle extra virgin olive oil over the salad for richness.

4. **Season:** Sprinkle a pinch of kosher salt over the top to enhance the flavors.

5. **Finish with Balsamic Glaze:** Drizzle balsamic glaze generously over the salad just before serving.

Variations to Try

Exploring Flavor Combinations

While the classic Watermelon Caprese Salad is delightful on its own, there are numerous varia-variations you can explore to suit your taste preferences:

- Add Fresh Herbs: Incorporate fresh basil or mint for an aromatic twist.
- Include Nuts: Sprinkle toasted pine nuts or walnuts for added crunch and flavor.
- Experiment with Cheese: Try feta cheese instead of mozzarella for a tangier profile.
- Spice it Up: Add a sprinkle of chili flakes for a hint of heat.

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Featured Exercise

Wall Squat

HOW TO DO IT:

If you have knee or hip problems, a wall squat can provide extra support.

- Stand with your back against a wall and step your feet out about 12 inches from the wall.
- Bend your knees, dropping into a squat while keeping your back pinned to the wall throughout the movement.
- Stop when your thighs are parallel to the ground. Push up through your heels back to start.

THE BENEFITS:

Stay Strong, Stay Steady: Why Wall Squats Matter

As we move through the different seasons of life, staying strong and mobile becomes more than just a fitness goal—it's a key to independence and confidence. Enter the wall squat: a simple move with serious impact. This low-impact powerhouse strengthens your quads, glutes, and calves, helping you build stability, support your joints, and move with ease. Whether you're just getting started or looking to level up your routine, wall squats are a must-have for lower body strength that lasts.

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

Meet Ulliance Senior Wellness Account Manager