

From The Desk Of

Gina

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December 2023 Newsletter

Month #7 of our Member Health Care Venture!

Hello Everyone,

Hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving with family and friends!

The month of November just got away from me, which is why no one received a “November Newsletter.”

Regarding the **MEMBER PORTAL**, has anyone been able to access any of the myriad “member perks” available on the site? IF so, please email me at ggrecotartaglia@smdmd.com to let me know about any great finds I can pass onto others.

Hope everyone received their **FLU Vaccines**. IF not, please do so at your earliest convenience as the cases of Influenza are starting to build.

If you have any questions about the **COVID booster and/ or the new RSV vaccine**, please feel free to email, call or schedule an appointment to discuss.

Regarding your **Annual Well Visits**, if you have not already had one or do not have an upcoming appointment, please call the office to schedule at 914-962-GINA (4462).

Patients are frequently asking, when should I use which contact method?

Here's a quick guideline:

- If you need anything **URGENTLY** (after hours, before 8am or after 6 pm), call my cell number (914-419-8391)
- If you need a **ROUTINE** or sick visit appointment, call the MEMBER NUMBER (914-962-GINA (4462)) during office hours
- If you have a **NON-URGENT** concern, you can TEXT or email me anytime at ggrecotartaglia@smdmd.com

Hope this clarifies.

November's Member Event was a BLAST!

- Breakfast was catered by Uncle Giuseppe's

- We were all wearing our PURPLE Tee shirts (very chic)
- Many of us walked around the track at the DeVito Field (exercise for the day)
- We had a very knowledgeable CGM (continuous glucose monitor) device representative there who gave out lots of good information on Diabetes and blood sugar management.

See below for a few pictures from the event:



I am working on our next MEMBER EVENT and I need your input. Please click on the button below to fill out a three-question survey about what you'd like to see us do or cover for the next member

event.

[CLICK HERE TO FILL OUT A MEMBER EVENT SURVEY](#)

Again, thank you all for your support as we navigate through this new health venture!

National Health Observance for December Seasonal Affective Disorder Awareness Month

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons — seasonal affective disorder (SAD) begins and ends at about the same times every year. If you're like most people with SAD, your symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody.

Signs and symptoms of SAD may include:

- Feeling listless, sad or down most of the day, nearly every day
- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Having low energy and feeling sluggish
- Having problems with sleeping too much
- Experiencing carbohydrate cravings, overeating and weight gain
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Feeling hopeless, worthless or guilty
- Having thoughts of not wanting to live

Causes

The specific cause of seasonal affective disorder remains unknown. Some factors that may come into play include:

- **Your biological clock (circadian rhythm).** The reduced level of sunlight in fall and winter may cause winter-onset SAD. This decrease in sunlight may disrupt your body's internal clock and lead to feelings of depression.
- **Serotonin levels.** A drop in serotonin, a brain chemical (neurotransmitter) that affects mood, might play a role in SAD. Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin that may trigger depression.
- **Melatonin levels.** The change in season can disrupt the balance of the body's level of melatonin, which plays a role in sleep patterns and mood.

Risk factors

Seasonal affective disorder is diagnosed more often in women than in men. And SAD occurs more frequently in younger adults than in older adults.

Factors that may increase your risk of seasonal affective disorder include:

- **Family history.** People with SAD may be more likely to have blood relatives with SAD or another form of depression.

- **Having major depression or bipolar disorder.** Symptoms of depression may worsen seasonally if you have one of these conditions.
- **Living far from the equator.** SAD appears to be more common among people who live far north or south of the equator. This may be due to decreased sunlight during the winter and longer days during the summer months.
- **Low level of vitamin D.** Some vitamin D is produced in the skin when it's exposed to sunlight. Vitamin D can help to boost serotonin activity. Less sunlight and not getting enough vitamin D from foods and other sources may result in low levels of vitamin D in the body.

Prevention and Treatment

There's no known way to prevent the development of seasonal affective disorder. However, if you take steps early on to manage symptoms, you may be able to prevent them from getting worse over time. You may be able to head off serious changes in mood, appetite and energy levels, as you can predict the time of the year in which these symptoms may start. Treatment can help prevent complications, especially if SAD is diagnosed and treated before symptoms get bad.

Some people find it helpful to begin treatment before symptoms would normally start in the fall or winter, and then continue treatment past the time symptoms would normally go away. Other people need continuous treatment to prevent symptoms from recurring.

For more information go to www.MayoClinic.org

Dr. Gina Greco-Tartaglia

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