



HORIZONS

CARING • EDUCATING • HEALING

WINTER • 2024

Beating the Winter Blues *A Guide to Treating Seasonal Mood Changes*

By Dr. Taryn Lawler

As the days grow shorter and the weather grows colder, many of us experience some changes to our routines and moods. Changes in emotions are a normal, healthy part of life. However, for some people, these mood changes can be more severe. For those who suffer from significant, recurrent changes in mood and energy levels that correspond with the fall and winter months, the cause may be a major depressive disorder (MDD) with a seasonal pattern. This condition is sometimes referred to as seasonal affective disorder or SAD.

Seasonal mood disorders affect between 4-10% of the population. They are characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, difficulty concentrating, irritability, overeating, and feeling tired or fatigued. Many people with MDD report sleeping more than usual but still feeling tired.

While it's normal to have off days or feel sad about something that didn't go the way you had hoped, people who suffer from MDD have extended periods of depression that affect their daily activities.

Seasonal Cause, Seasonal Cures

Fortunately, there are effective treatments available. These seasonal mood changes are caused, at least in part, by a decrease in sun exposure. Our bodies depend on sunlight to regulate our moods and our sleep cycles. Without adequate sunlight, our bodies cannot produce enough vitamin D, a critical component of mood regulation. A lack of sunlight also impacts the brain's production of two other substances that research shows affect mood and our ability to regulate sleep: melatonin and serotonin.

Bright light therapy has been shown to be an effective treatment option. In light therapy, patients sit in front of a bright light

for 30-40 minutes each day. These lights mimic sunlight and trigger your body's production of melatonin and serotonin, effectively boosting mood and supporting healthier sleep. The lights used for this type of therapy are now readily available online at reasonable costs. If you purchase one, look for a lamp that produces enough light (10,000 lux) and filters UV light, which can cause eye damage. Taking vitamin D3 supplements can also improve symptoms. These supplements come in a variety of doses. Aim to get between 2,000–3,000 IUs per day.

Other Ways to Change Your Brain Chemistry

Moods and feelings are based on chemistry in the nervous system. What that means is that the way you feel is connected to the chemicals and hormones that are present in your brain and body. *(Continued on page 3)*





Emergency Care and Cardiac Rehab Close to Home

Father's Day of 2023 Didn't Go as Planned for Gary Gobin

Gary Gobin with Clinical Exercise Physiologist Shelly Maxwell

“I woke up with chest pain, which I’d had the previous two days. I had thought it was heartburn, but it felt different that morning,” said Gobin. “I asked Barb to bring me to the ER.”

By the time he and his wife, Barb, reached The Richland Hospital and Clinics Emergency Room, nurse Terry Adams was waiting for them. Each year, more than 700 patients report to TRHC’s ER with chest pain. For most, those symptoms aren’t caused by a heart attack, but in Gary’s case, they were.

“Once we have confirmed the heart attack, it’s all very routine for us,” said Adams, who has been an ER nurse at the hospital for 39 years. That level of experience allows what is an emergency for a patient to feel predictable and controlled for Adams and his colleagues. And for patients like Gary, the early intervention offered by the ER staff can reduce damage to the heart and, in some cases, save a life.

As the ER team prepared Gary for transport to UW-Health in Madison, his two grown children joined their parents in the ER. In retrospect, Gobin remembers the thoughtful care that was shown to his family while he awaited transport.

Gobin was flown by helicopter to Madison where surgeons placed a stent in one artery. During the procedure, however, they noticed significant blockage in other areas of Gobin’s

heart. His doctors decided that it’d be best to wait for bypass surgery until he had recovered from his heart attack. So, he came home to Richland Center with a return trip to Madison on his calendar.

CARDIAC REHABILITATION AT TRHC

Gary is no stranger to hard work. At 48 he went back to school for a second degree, working full-time while attending class. In his mid-50s, he and his wife decided to build their own retirement home. Now, post-heart attack and post-triple bypass surgery, the work Gary is focused on is cardiac rehab.

For patients like Gary who are recovering from heart surgery, The Richland Hospital and Clinics offers a 36-session cardiac rehab program. The sessions are designed to assess a patient’s cardiovascular strength and increase their stamina over time through moderate-intensity workouts three days a week.

For many patients, starting a new exercise routine after a cardiac event can be difficult; in some cases, it can even be dangerous. Which is one of the benefits of TRHC’s rehab program: patients receive the support they need to establish a healthy exercise routine and they do so under the supervision of trained medical staff. ➔

Gary participated in two sessions—the first provided rehab for his stent placement and the second ensured his full recovery from bypass surgery. Now near the end of his second session, Gary says it's been a great experience. He feels healthier and stronger, and he has enjoyed the variety the sessions offer, which has allowed him to find new exercises he enjoys.

One of the benefits of TRHC's rehab program is that patients receive the support they need to establish a healthy exercise routine and they do so under the supervision of trained medical staff.

Clinical Exercise Physiologist Shelly Maxwell says Gary is progressing well. "He has a great attitude," Maxwell says, "and that's such an important component for people who are recovering from a heart attack."

According to Maxwell, the physical exercise the rehab program offers is only part of what makes it so helpful for patients: "In order to thrive, these patients also need emotional and social support.

Because we meet regularly as a group, our program offers that kind of support. Many of our patients don't want to leave when their sessions are over."

LOOKING AHEAD

While he has enjoyed his time in rehab, Gary is eager to get back to his normal activities, like chopping wood and hunting. For many patients who find success in the rehab program, the next challenge is maintaining healthy levels of activity once the program is over. Gobin says he's aware of that challenge, and he's ready for it.

"My wife has always been an avid walker, and I am joining her now," Gobin said. After his heart attack, Gobin's daughter gave him a watch that tracks the number of steps he takes each day. "I've walked 120 miles in the last four weeks," Gobin says with a smile. That kind of activity meets what the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends for adults: 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise every week.

With his surgery and rehab behind him, Gary Gobin is looking toward the future. "I'm living on bonus time. I'm aware of that," says Gobin. His family is aware of it, too. As his wife Barb put it, "We look forward to celebrating Father's Day a little differently next year."

Winter Blues

(continued from page 1)

While we might sometimes feel subject to these chemicals, there are actions we can take that allow us to affect this chemistry and, in effect, change how we feel. There are reliable ways we can affect our chemistry. Three I commonly recommend are movement, novelty, and sleep.

Movement: Regular physical activity is one of the most effective treatments for depression symptoms. One possible reason people experience increased mood disorders through the winter may be related to a lack of physical activity. And while it's more challenging to get exercise in winter, it isn't impossible.

Medicare's Silver Sneakers program has a large library of exercise videos available for free online, which are a great way to get moving if you're afraid of slipping on the ice. Even something as simple as vacuuming with music and dancing can increase your heart rate. Find ways to get moving and you'll likely find you feel better.

Novelty: Research shows that breaking out of our normal routines and experiencing something new is good for us. Taking a new path to work or the grocery store, listening to music that is unfamiliar to us, or putting ourselves in a new situation can all provide an experience of novelty. Getting out

of our usual ruts can boost energy and spark our interest in other people and the world around us.

Sleep: Most people don't get enough rest. While this may not be the case for people suffering from MDD, creating a regular sleep routine is another way to support your mental health. Going to bed and getting up at the same time each day, avoiding alcohol, and taking a break from phone and computer screens before going to bed can lead to more restful sleep.

When to Seek Help

While there is much you can do on your own to address feelings of depression, it's important to know when to ask for help. Any time your mental state is interfering with your normal activities, it's time to reach out for support.

For anyone who is experiencing suicidal thoughts, counseling services are always available through the national suicide hotline by dialing 988. If you are a farmer struggling with mental health, you're not alone. Fortunately, the DATCP farmer wellness hotline is available at 888.901.2558.

If you have a primary care provider, check in with them about your mental health. Our team can provide you with resources and information about counseling and therapy options, as well as prescribe medications and help to monitor your symptoms. As with any illness, our goal is to understand the root cause of the issue and offer treatment options that can best address your particular situation.

Personalized, Preventative Care with a PCP

Finding a Primary Care Provider Who is Right for You

For anyone concerned with seeking a proactive approach to well-being, developing a relationship with a primary care doctor is an essential step. Primary care physicians, often referred to as PCPs, have broad training in medicine and provide care for people throughout all stages of life.

An established relationship with a primary care physician can improve the care you receive and support your long-term health. Not only because regular visits with your PCP ensure you benefit from preventative care like vaccinations and age-appropriate health screenings, but also because these regular visits provide an opportunity to build a foundation of trust that can open the door to honest communication and transform your care.

Finding a Provider Who Listens

"It's critical for patients to find a provider who they feel comfortable with and who will listen to their concerns," says Dr. Brian Kroll. "It's important they find someone who takes the time to know what makes them tick."

Finding that level of comfort with your doctor is one way that a primary care relationship can improve your health. "When a patient feels comfortable sharing their concerns, it's much easier for us to get to the heart of what might be going on," says Dr. Kroll.

Having an established primary care relationship also allows you to be an active participant in your health journey. Dr. Myssa Nguyen says she likes to approach patient care as a guide who helps patients move toward their health goals. "I'm here to help patients get the quality of life that they want," says Dr. Nguyen. To do that well, she says listening is a must: "Understanding what a patient wants is the first step. From there, I can share information with them and help them make informed decisions about their health."



Clockwise from top left: Dr. Kroll, Tanya Neumaier, APNP, Dr. Nguyen, Jenna Taylor, APNP

As Life Progresses, Your Care Should, Too

An ongoing relationship with a care provider can also improve health outcomes because it allows your doctor to become increasingly familiar with your unique needs. Your family and medical history, changes in your weight, or even lifestyle changes like a new job can impact your health. A primary care doctor who has met with you over several years is more likely to be attuned to these changes and their potential influence on your well-being.

Talking to your doctor about changes you notice can ease your mind and reduce stress. Oftentimes, these conversations serve as an opportunity to learn more about your health. In some cases, these conversations may even help your doctor flag illnesses or abnormalities sooner than they might have otherwise.

"I've had instances where routine check-ups and conversations have led to an early cancer diagnosis, even when we weren't looking for it," says Dr. Nguyen. In those instances, tests revealed data that was unusual, so Dr. Nguyen took a closer look and discovered some early signs of cancer. Because the disease was discovered early, the treatment plan was successful.

Location Matters

Location is another factor to consider when choosing a primary care provider. Depending on your health needs, regular visits with your PCP may be necessary, so it's important to ensure that the supportive care you need is also convenient.

For those patients located in the Spring Green area, Tanya Neumaier, APNP, offers primary care through our Spring Green Medical Center. In the Muscoda area, Jenna Taylor, APNP, is accepting new patients at the Muscoda Health Center.

Taylor says that while her training has enabled her to offer a high level of care for patients, she doesn't view herself as being so different from those she serves. "We are all part of the same rural community," she says. Having a provider who understands your community can make a difference, too.

Advocating for Yourself

Regardless of who your primary care provider is, it's important to take an active role in your health care. Asking questions and making sure you understand your health risks and options will lead to better care. In fact, our providers recommend bringing a list of questions to your appointments, along with an updated list of your medications and any supplements you might take.

It's also okay to change providers if you feel a need to. Finding a doctor you feel at ease with may take a little time, but it's worth the effort. Don't be afraid to meet with a few providers before choosing your PCP.

Getting Started

Like many things in life, getting started is sometimes the hardest part. Fortunately, scheduling an appointment with our providers is easy. The providers mentioned in this article and others are accepting new patients.

You can review all our providers' profiles on the "Find a Provider" page on our website.



At The Richland Hospital Foundation, our sole purpose is to enhance exceptional health care throughout our community by supporting The Richland Hospital and Clinics. We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of this year's donors whose contributions helped fulfill our mission in 2023.

With your donations, we were able to purchase more than \$82,000 of equipment for the areas listed below:

- 1. Emergency Department Advancements:** The new Glidescope empowers our care providers to conduct advanced airway procedures, ensuring optimal patient care in the ER.
- 2. Patient Comfort and Safety:** Two power exam tables enhance patient positioning, prioritizing safety and comfort during medical examinations.
- 3. Birth Center Rapid Response:** A dedicated postpartum hemorrhage rapid response unit now ensures that all essential supplies are consolidated to facilitate swift response in the Birth Center.
- 4. Lab Efficiency:** A new high-performance blood bank refrigerator for our lab will ensure the safe storage of blood products and maintain the integrity of vital medical resources.
- 5. Employee Safety Measures:** The TSI PortaCount facilitates fit tests for employees mandated by OSHA to use N95 respiratory equipment, contributing significantly to their safety as they provide essential patient care.
- 6. Fitness Room Improvements:** A new elliptical was added to our employee fitness room through direct employee donations.

Every year, the foundation's dedication to The Richland Hospital and Clinics ensures better care for our patients. We extend our deep gratitude to each of you for contributing to our vital mission.

Thank you for being integral to our ongoing commitment to advancing health care excellence.

Save the date for our annual golf outing on Thursday, June 13, 2024.

A COLD & FLU SURVIVAL GUIDE

By Shawna Kratochwill, RN



IS IT A COLD OR FLU?

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

Source: CDC; Materials developed by CDC

The cold and flu season is here. Hundreds of viruses cause the common cold. Unfortunately, we have no tests to identify them or medicine to cure them. While we can identify influenza A and B and anti-viral medicines like Tamiflu can reduce the length and severity of illness, they also cannot be cured.

If you start to feel the tell-tale throat tickle, it's time to gear up and get ready for a fight. The great news is that your body has everything it needs to fight off the enemy virus—an immune system! Here are some things you can do to help your immune system and deal with your symptoms.

GIVE YOUR BODY A FIGHTING CHANCE

Rest: Sleep is vital. When you sleep your body repairs itself from daily wear and tear. People who are sleep-deprived are more likely to get sick. If you do become ill, get plenty of rest. While you're asleep, your immune system gets the energy it needs to fight the virus.

Hydration: Your body needs water to function normally and when you are sick, it needs even more. Hydration strengthens your immune system, thins thick mucus, and fights fever. You'll also feel better. If you become dehydrated, symptoms such as fever, headache, weakness, and muscle and joint aching are made worse. Drink lots of water and electrolyte beverages and avoid high-sugar sodas, juices, and energy drinks.

REMEDIES

• **Warm liquids** like tea or apple cider will soothe your irritated throat and ease coughing.

• **Run a humidifier** to keep your mucus membranes moist and soothed. Moderately humid air is less hospitable to viruses and can help shorten your illness.

• **Inhaling hot steam** can help clear congestion, ease a sore throat and chills, and thin mucus. Sit in the bathroom for 15 minutes with the door closed while running a hot shower. Or make a steam tent by pouring hot water into a bowl, leaning your head near the bowl, and tenting a towel over the bowl and your head until the steam dissipates.

• **Salt gargles** can calm a sore throat by reducing swelling and removing irritating mucus. Stir a half teaspoon of salt into a glass of warm water then gargle with the salt water and spit it out. Repeat as often as needed.

• **Nasal irrigation** can remove excess mucus from your sinuses and reduce swelling. Use a neti pot, syringe, or purchased irrigation kit. **ONLY USE DISTILLED OR STERILE WATER, OR PURCHASED SOLUTION FOR NASAL IRRIGATION.** →

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

These medications can be purchased without a prescription and can ease your cold and flu symptoms. They are often combined in cold medicines. Talk to your doctor to make sure these medicines are appropriate for you to use.

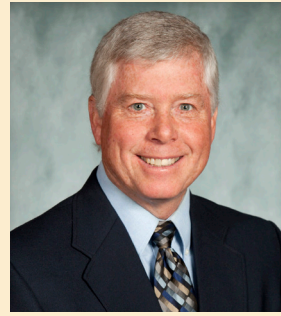
- **Pain relievers** such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin), and naproxen (Aleve) can reduce fever and ease body pain and headache. NSAIDS (ibuprofen and naproxen) also relieve inflammation that causes congestion and sore throat.
- **Decongestants** such as pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine (Sudafed) can reduce congestion and clear nasal passages.
- **Antihistamines** like diphenhydramine (Benadryl) can reduce sneezing and runny nose.
- **Cough suppressant** dextromethorphan can be found in cough drops and cold medicines.
- **Expectorant** guaifenesin (Mucinex) can thin and loosen mucus.

A cold and flu typically last 5 to 10 days but can last longer and the cough may linger for weeks. If you aren't better after 10 days or have any of the following signs and symptoms, you should seek medical help:

- Signs of severe dehydration: confusion, rapid heartbeat or palpitations, not urinating.
- Chest pain.
- Shortness of breath.
- Ear pain.
- Fever that does not go away after four days.
- A cough that produces blood or thick, foul-smelling mucus.

We always recommend getting vaccinated, washing hands frequently, and wearing a mask to reduce spreading the illness. We at TRHC want you to enjoy the healthiest life possible, especially during the holidays as you gather with loved ones.

Balancing Aspirations with Realities: *Why We'll Wait To Build Our New Hospital*



I think we can all relate to the idea of living within our means. Sometimes, our aspirations are stymied because they are simply unaffordable. Unfortunately, this has been our recent experience at The Richland Hospital and Clinics.

In 2018, when we first envisioned building a new hospital, the all-in project cost was estimated to be \$80 million. Fast forward five years. We all experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. Ballooning inflation followed, along with increasing interest rates, supply chain issues, and rising costs in the construction industry. Acknowledging this new reality, the board of directors set a new project budget of \$115 million.

Despite the increased budget, two things became clear to hospital leadership and the board over the last few months. First, an acceptable building design that would meet our staff and patient needs appeared financially out of reach at this time. Second, continuing to move forward would create significant financial risk for the organization. As a result, the board of directors ultimately made the difficult decision to pause any further design work for a replacement facility, at least for now.

The employees of The Richland Hospital and Clinics invested a tremendous amount of time, energy, and expertise into planning for a new facility. Much has been learned through this experience, which will no doubt help us improve our operations and your patient experience in our current facility. A new hospital is not in the rearview mirror. It will remain in front of us, but just down the road a ways.

With optimism,

John Annear, Board of Directors Chair

Happy 2024 from Partners of The Richland Hospital and Clinics!

Partners members never stop planning for the future of our organization. This year, we're eager to build on the success of our usual fundraising and appreciation events but also change things up by exploring new ideas. Where will these new ideas come from? Well, there are many creative people among our membership, and we also partner with groups like ours that support similarly sized hospitals. This year, we also hope some of these new ideas will come from new members.

What is required of a member? Beyond a small membership fee, the single requirement is a sincere desire to be of service to the patients and staff of The Richland Hospital and Clinics. Our service takes the form of assisting at hospital-sponsored

events, volunteering for areas of need within the organization, and awarding scholarships.

We're proud of what we were able to do in 2023, including providing three \$1,000 scholarships to students enrolled in health care related programs. These scholarships were largely funded by Lobby Shoppe sales, our two flower sales, and our No-Bake Bake Sale.

Officers for 2024 include Cindy Chicker, President; Cindy Hanold, Vice-President; Trudy Kinyon, Secretary; and JoAnn Tennant, Treasurer. Information on membership can be found on the hospital's website or by contacting the Lobby Shoppe, M-F between the hours of 11 AM and 3 PM.



THE RICHLAND HOSPITAL
and Clinics

333 East Second Street
Richland Center, WI 53581

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

The Richland Community Coffee Club	Thursday, Jan. 4	8:00 – 10:00 AM
Caregiver Support Group	Tuesday, Jan. 23	10:30 – 11:30 AM

FEBRUARY

The Richland Community Coffee Club	Thursday, Feb. 1	8:00 – 10:00 AM
ImpactLife Blood Drive	Thursday, Feb. 8	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Caregiver Support Group	Tuesday, Feb. 27	10:30 – 11:30 AM

MARCH

The Richland Community Coffee Club	Thursday, Mar. 7	8:00 – 10:00 AM
Caregiver Support Group	Tuesday, Mar. 26	10:30 – 11:30 AM



February is American Heart Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the U.S.

Risk factors include having unmanaged high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.

Lifestyle factors like being overweight, having an unhealthy diet, or a lack of physical activity can also put you at risk.

Ask your doctor about your risk factors and support your heart health today.



The Richland Hospital and Clinics

333 East Second Street • Richland Center, WI 53581

Hospital: 608.647.6321 • Clinic: 608.647.6161

Muscoda Health Center

1075 North Wisconsin Avenue • Muscoda, WI 53573

608.739.3113

Spring Green Medical Center

150 East Jefferson Street • Spring Green, WI 53588

608.588.7413

RichlandHospital.com

Connect with us on:     



Were you born in The Richland Hospital?

This year will mark the 100-year anniversary of The Richland Hospital and Clinics. As part of our celebration, we're hoping to share multi-generational photos of families whose members were born within our walls.

We're privileged to have been a part of so many families' birth experiences, the first dating back to 1924. If your family members were born here, we'd love to share a multi-generational photo of your smiling faces on our social media accounts.

Digital images can be sent to CommunityRelations@RichlandHospital.com.