

September 1, 2009

To whom it may concern:

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), or winter clinical depression, is an accepted psychiatric diagnosis with standardized diagnostic criteria. In the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), the standard medical classification system published by the American Psychiatric Association, SAD is listed as a *seasonal pattern* course specifier for:

CODE NO.	DIAGNOSIS
DSM-IV-296.3x	Major Depressive Disorder, Recurrent
DSM-IV-296.4x	Bipolar Disorder, Manic
DSM-IV-296.5x	Bipolar Disorder, Depressed
DSM-IV-296.6x	Bipolar Disorder, Mixed
DSM-IV-296.70	Bipolar Disorder, NOS

The current recommended first-line treatment for SAD or *seasonal pattern* is light therapy. Light therapy is now a standard medical treatment and is no longer considered experimental. Light therapy has been included as a recommended treatment for SAD in the latest clinical practice guidelines of the American Psychiatric Association, the Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments, and the World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry. Summary references for these clinical guidelines are included below.

In order to administer light therapy, a 10,000 lux fluorescent light box or other light device is required. This light box and treatment should be regarded as a medical necessity and preferable to other forms of treatment.

Sincerely,

PRACTITIONER NAME

Practitioner Address

References

American Psychiatric Association: Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Major Depressive Disorder (Revision, April, 2000). American Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 157, No.4 (Supplement), p.31, 2000. www.psych.org

Bauer M, Whybrow PC, Angst J, Versiani M, Moller H-J: World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry (WFSBP) guidelines for biological treatment of unipolar depressive disorders, Part 1: Acute and continuation treatment of major depressive disorder. World Journal of Biological Psychiatry Vol. 3, pp 5-43, 2002.

Lam RW, Levitt AJ, editors: Canadian Consensus Guidelines for the Treatment of Seasonal Affective Disorder. Vancouver, BC; Clinical & Academic Publishing, 1999, ISBN 0-9685874-0-2. Available at www.UBCsad.ca

Ravindran AV, Filteau MJ, Lam RW, Lesperance F, Kennedy SH, Parikh SV, Patten SB: Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments (CANMAT) clinical guidelines for the management of major depressive disorder in adults. V. Complementary and alternative medicine treatments. Journal of Affective Disorders Vol. 117, Supplement 1, pp S54-S64, 2009. www.canmat.org