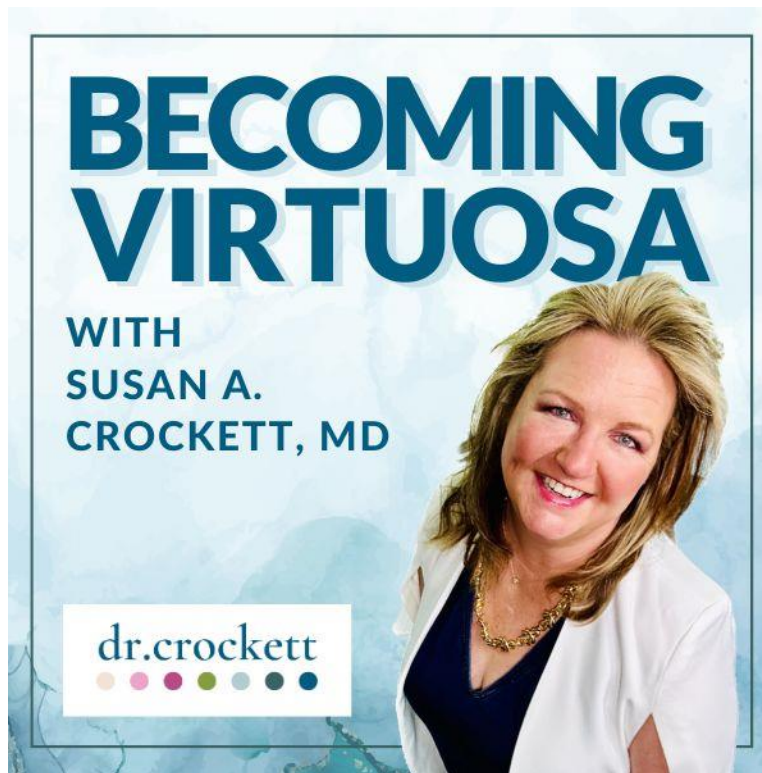


Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Susan A. Crockett, MD

Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder

So dark chocolate is one that makes people really happy. I'd like to recommend the dark cocoa over 75% and so you're getting less of the sugar that you would get in a milk chocolate and more of the dark cacao. If you're really brave, you can do the raw cacao nibs. Those are the most dense chocolate with no added sugar or milk. So those are good mood boosters and they're also healthy vegan food.

Welcome to *Becoming Virtuosa*, the podcast that encourages you to become your best virtuosa self. Each week Dr. Susan Crockett goes where the scalpel can't reach, exploring conversations about how to be, heal, love, give, grow, pray, and attune. For the first time ever, she's bringing the personal one on one teaching that she shares with individual patients to you on this broader platform. A weekly source of inspiration and encouragement designed to empower you.

By evolving ourselves as individuals. We influence and transform the world around us. Please help me welcome board certified OB-GYN specializing in minimally invasive GYN surgery, internationally in the top 1% of all GYN robotic surgeons, a certified life coach, and US News top doctor, your host Susan A. Crockett, MD.

Okay. Welcome back to The Dr. Crockett Show. I am your host, Dr. Susan Crockett. I am a board certified OBGYN in San Antonio, Texas, and I specialize in robotic surgery for women or minimally invasive GYN surgery. We call ourselves MIGS, M-I-G-S, surgeons. And this is The Dr. Crockett Show where we go where the scalpel doesn't reach.

So this show is not about surgery. I am developing a channel for that. In fact, I am working on it this weekend and feeling a lot of stress, a lot of pressure to get the new channel, multiple channels going. But, but today I'm not going to worry about that because I get to talk with you guys and it is January and I am going to talk about seasonal affective disorder today or SAD.

Dr. Crockett presents [Becoming Virtuosa](#)

Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder

This is not to be confused with the SAD, which is the standard American diet that we've talked about on the show before. This is a different kind of SAD or S-A-D. Seasonal affective disorder is a form of depression that happens in a cyclic fashion along with the seasons. And this is something that I have suffered with since, you can go back and look at my report card from fourth grade and you can see seasonal affective disorder in my grades in January, every year it happens.

So there's a lot of theories about this. It's characterized by fatigue. Wanting to sleep all the time. I tell people I just want to hibernate. In fact, I was supposed to do a show today called How to Have More Energy. Yeah, it's not happening. We're doing this one instead. Maybe I'll do that one next week. I am doing a freebie for that. So keep your eyes open for the freebie for how to have more energy coming. That's on my to-do list, which is now like pages long, but it's coming. It's on there. I haven't forgotten y'all.

So seasonal affective disorder, loss of interest in activities that normally seem like fun. In more severe cases, there can be more classic severe depression or suicidal ideation symptoms. That's usually not just somebody with seasonal affective disorder. That's usually somebody that's struggling with some form of depression on another level that it gets the seasonal affective disorder layered on top of it.

So, so characteristics fatigue, loss of memory, what did I just say? And loss of interest in like socializing and doing fun things like TV shows and a whole lot of productivity. I literally come home from work doing a whole bunch of surgeries in a day and I just wanna curl up on the couch with Ollie, my doggie, with a blanket, and I just want to hibernate. And I respond really strongly to the length of day, the length of sunlight. And we have just gone through the shortest daylight day of the year, right before Christmas on the 22nd. And now we're heading back into the days starting to get longer.

Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder

I'm still going through this kind of just want to go home and sleep type of thing. I want to go to sleep as soon as the sun goes down and sleep until it comes up. I usually feel better around spring break, March, this comes in lifts.

So one of the things I thought would be helpful in addition to you hearing kind of my own story about this and how I've struggled with it is the things that we can do, the things that I recommend to my patients who struggle with this. The first thing may seem obvious, which is get more sunlight in your eyes. So when the sun is out, see if you can get 10 to 30 minutes of sunlight, go for a walk. Exercise is number two, but getting the sunshine in your eyes actually helps a lot.

Before I go on to that, we want to talk about artificial sunlight. So there are sun lamps that you can buy, and I'm not talking about sun tanning beds. I'm talking about lamps that you can buy for seasonal affective disorder that mirror the wavelengths of the beneficial light from the sun. And a lot of people who suffer from seasonal affective disorder buy these lamps and they have them next to them and they use them for their reading lamps or if you have crafts that you do like sewing or knitting or crocheting or whatever, these lamps make an excellent choice for that type of working light because not only is it good light for being able to see, but it also helps your brain feel less fog and feel a little bit better.

So I will put a link below to a couple of those available in Amazon and you can use those links to purchase those if you'd like to hop on and buy some lamp light.

So first is sunlight, second is exercise. So the recommendation for exercise is that we get 30 minutes of exercise five times a week or 150 minutes of exercise a week and that is not happening to all Americans, most Americans. So exercise helps release endorphins, gets your blood flowing,

Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder

gets your energy up, and can definitely help with symptoms of any kind of depression.

My third recommendation is for some easy things, easy hacks in your kitchen. So dark chocolate is one that makes people really happy. I'd like to recommend the dark cocoa over 75% and so you're getting less of the sugar that you would get in a milk chocolate and more of the dark cacao. If you're really brave, you can do the raw cacao nibs. Those are the most dense chocolate with no added sugar or milk. So those are good mood boosters and they're also healthy vegan food. So that's yay for chocolate. The other group of foods that are helpful are citrus like oranges and lemons and limes and those are helpful during these months too.

The most popular recommendation that we have for helping with seasonal affect disorder is actually to have some sexy time. Yep. That helps increase your dopamine levels and releases endorphins as well and can help brighten the mood. And that's a really fun hack.

And last but not least, I'm going to talk a little bit about supplementation. So we in the United States as Americans, we're almost universally deficient in vitamin D. Vitamin D and magnesium are both two of the most important supplements for helping us not feel so bad when we're going through a depressive bouts, whether it's seasonal affective disorder or other forms of depression. And so we at The Dr. Crockett Show always encourage you to get all of your nutritional needs as you can through your food, but when you can't, supplements can sometimes be helpful.

I wanna point out that we have a daily essentials pack in The Dr. Crockett Show that has all of the vitamin D and magnesium that you need during a day. It combines it also with a healthy omega and a probiotic for your gut. So the omega is for your brain, probiotic for your gut, and then an iron-free multivitamin that's high grade pharmaceutical quality. So we'll put a link to that below as well.

Ep #120: Beat the Winter Blues: Overcoming Seasonal Affective Disorder

And if you have other suggestions about how you beat the winter blues, my last thing is I give into it. Honestly, after trying all the rest of the things to keep me awake, half the time I'm just like, I'm just gonna hibernate. I'm gonna go to sleep and take my rest and back down on my obligations and take care of me.

I'm gonna recommend that you do the same for you. Take care of yourselves. I'll see you next week on The Dr. Crockett Show. Have a wonderful week.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Becoming Virtuosa*. To learn more, come visit us at DrCrockett.com, or find us on YouTube for the Dr. Crockett Show. If you found this episode helpful or think it might help someone else, please like, subscribe, and share. This is how we grow together. Thanks, and I'll see you next week. Love always, Sue.