

# Extension Edge

An educational publication of Purdue Extension—DeKalb County

**PURDUE**  
UNIVERSITY

Extension - DeKalb County

November/December 2024

## Holiday Thanks to Agriculture

by Eliza Petry, Ag in an Instant Host, News Channel 20

With the holiday season upon us, it is important to remember how these celebrations are rooted in agriculture.

There are 15,000 Christmas tree farms in the United States.

An average sheep produces enough wool for six sweaters.

The U.S. produces around 99 billion eggs each year.

The United States produces 200 billion pounds of spices per year.

30 million trees are turned into gift wrapping paper every year.

318 million pounds of ham are consumed during the holidays.

17 states in the US grow cotton, with almost 15 million bales produced last year.

250 mint farmers in the U.S. contribute to 70% of the world's mint supply.

*As you enjoy this holiday season, be sure to be thankful for the farmers that make our holiday traditions possible.*



*As Christmas is right around the corner, it is important to remember how the holidays are rooted in agriculture.*

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# HOMEMAKERS DAY AT THE FAIR 2024







## holiday cookie & candy walk

**Saturday, November 16th**  
9:00am-2:00pm

Dekalb County Fairgrounds  
Exhibit Hall  
708 s. union st. auburn, in 46706

open to the public!!

homemade cookies,  
candy, noodles, and more!  
\$10/pound

hosted by: Dekalb Co. Extension Homemakers



## DEKALB COUNTY EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS

### UPCOMING EVENTS

ALL EVENTS LISTED ARE OPEN TO THE THE PUBLIC!

**WED 10/23** **BEEF & NOODLE DINNER** 4:30-7:00pm  
dekalb co. fairgrounds exhibit hall  
708 s. union st. auburn, IN  
freewill donation

**9:00am-2:00pm** **COOKIE & CANDY STROLL** **SAT 11/16**  
dekalb co. fairgrounds exhibit hall  
708 s. union st. auburn, IN

**MON 11/18** **ROCK PAINTING** 6:00pm  
dekalb co. office building- basement  
215 e. 9th st. auburn, IN  
\$5/person

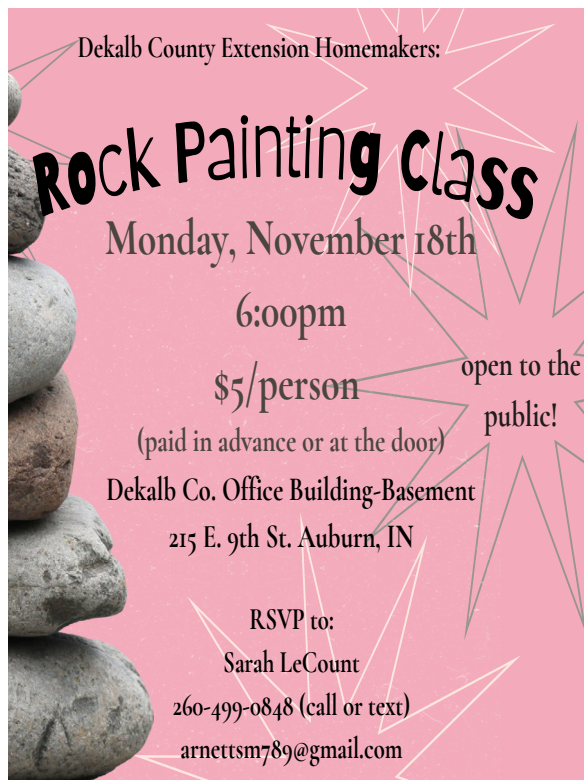
**\$15/person** **CANDY MAKING CLASS** **TUES 12/10 & 12/17**  
(only need to attend one day)  
dekalb co. office building- basement  
215 e. 9th st. auburn, IN

**SEW DAYS:**  
dekalb county office bldg.  
basement  
915 e. 9th st. auburn, IN

9am-3pm:  
November 12th  
January 14th  
March 11th  
May 13th

**NO SEWING  
EXPERIENCE  
NEEDED**

for more information or to RSVP to any event listed, please contact:  
Sarah LeCount, Vice President- 260-499-0848 (call or text), arnettsm789@gmail.com



Dekalb County Extension Homemakers:

## Rock Painting Class

**Monday, November 18th**  
6:00pm  
\$5/person  
(paid in advance or at the door)

open to the public!

Dekalb Co. Office Building-Basement  
215 E. 9th St. Auburn, IN

RSVP to:  
Sarah LeCount  
260-499-0848 (call or text)  
arnettsm789@gmail.com



dekalb co. extension homemakers:

## holiday candy making class

open to the public!!

**DECEMBER 10TH\***  
**DECEMBER 17TH\***

**\$15/person**

**6:00pm**

Dekalb Co. Office Building  
Basement  
215 E. 9th St.  
Auburn, IN

send rsvp & money to:  
\*please RSVP no later than 12/8 & 12/15\*  
(only attend 1 class)

Sue Carpenter  
2112 Shady Lane Garrett, IN 46738  
260-433-2333

The DeKalb County Extension Homemaker's  
Annual Christmas Party

## Old Fashioned Christmas

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

6 p.m. Exhibit Hall

Dinner Provided by

**Dutch Heritage**  
Baking & Catering

Baked Chicken Breast/Baked Pork Loin • Mashed Potatoes and Gravy  
• Green Beans • Toss Salad • Homemade Bread & Pie • Coffee • Water

**"Alaska the Last Frontier"**  
Presented by Paul and Cheryl Thomas

Please make reservations by  
**November 22, 2024**

**Suzanna Carpenter**

**2112 Shady Lane • Garrett, IN 46738**

**Make checks to DeKalb Extension Homemakers**

**Cost: \$15.00 for Club Members**

**\$20.00 for Non Club Members**

### HOMEMAKERS 2024 IMPORTANT DATES

<b>Nov 7</b>	<b>EH Council 6 pm, COB (Lower level)</b>
<b>Nov 11</b>	<b>Veterans Day - Extension Office Closed</b>
<b>Nov 12</b>	<b>Sew Day - 9 am - 3 pm bring a covered dish to share</b>
<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Cookie/Candy Stroll, Exhibit Hall (See page 3)</b>
<b>Nov 18</b>	<b>Rock Painting, Cost \$5.00 - 6 pm, COB (Lower level) (See page 3)</b>
<b>Nov 28-29</b>	<b>Thanksgiving - Extension Office Closed</b>
<b>Dec 4</b>	<b>County Christmas Party - 6 pm, Exhibit Hall (See above)</b>
<b>Dec 10 &amp; 17</b>	<b>Candy Making - 6 pm COB (Lower level) Cost \$15.00 each class (See page 3)</b>
<b>Dec 24 &amp; 25</b>	<b>Christmas Holiday - Extension Office Closed</b>

\*COB - Lower Level of County Office Bldg., 215 E. 9th St., Auburn.



Hello Ladies!

Hope all is well with you all!

Our gardens are done producing and cleaned out, canning is all done, and our freezer is full. Now we are just anxiously awaiting winter's arrival. LOL!

It has been a good summer and a beautiful fall so far. Our honey did very well at 950 pounds harvested! (So you know who to call if you need any honey).

Well, by the time you read this, the Beef and Noodle Dinner will be over, but I want to THANK YOU for all your help and all the pies you so graciously donated! It is always a fun, but busy time. We did have plenty of noodles to sell as a part of the dinner.

Mark your calendars for the following upcoming events:

**November 7th** - Extension Homemaker Council Meeting, 6:00 PM at the County Office Building

**November 12th** - Sew Day, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM at the County Office Building (please bring a dish to share)

**November 16th** - Cookie & Candy Stroll, 1:00 - 4:00 PM at the Exhibit Hall (We did raise the price to \$10 per pound, but that is still A LOT of cookies per pound!)

**November 18th** - Rock Painting Class, 6:00 PM at the County Office Building. Gather your grandkids and join us for the Rock Painting Class (pay is \$5 at the door). The kids sure do love this class!

**"PEOPLE OFTEN SAY THE MOTIVATION DOESN'T LAST. WELL, NEITHER DOES BATHING, SO THAT'S WHY WE RECOMMEND IT DAILY".- ZIG ZIGLAR**

~President Martha Close



# LEARN HOW KEEPING THE STUBBLE CAN HELP YOUR FARM THROUGHOUT NO-TILL NOVEMBER

# NO-TILL November

By Brandon O'Connor, Public Affairs Specialist  
Nov 02, 2023

In November, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is again playing off the popular awareness campaign, "No-Shave November" with our very own campaign, "#NoTillNovember." No-till (also called zero tillage or direct seeding/drilling) is a way of growing crops or pasture year over year with minimal soil disturbance through tillage.

Disturbing your soil through tillage reduces water infiltration, increases runoff, and can make the soil less productive. Tillage also disrupts the soil's natural biological cycles, damages soil structure, and increases erosion.

When you instead keep the stubble by reducing tillage or transitioning to a full no-till system you reap a multitude of benefits. These include, but are not limited to, improving the soil's structure which helps it retain more water, saving energy by reducing passes through the field, improving nutrient cycling in the field and increased soil organic matter.

Soil is a precious and irreplaceable resource. Reducing tillage on your land is one of the key principles of soil health, along with maximizing soil cover, the presence of living roots, and biodiversity. Working within these principles can help rebuild your soil health system and preserve this vital resource for future generations.

Whether you have never heard of no-till farming, are no-till curious but haven't taken the leap, or have already adopted no-till practices, our goal throughout November is to help you learn more about the practice, how it can help your farm and how NRCS can assist you in reducing tillage on your land.

Whether you farm thousands of acres of row crops, tend a small vegetable garden, or manage pasture for livestock, no-till can benefit your farm. NRCS has a wide variety of resources available in multiple languages to help you learn more about no-till farming, many of which will be highlighted during #NoTillNovember. To learn more about how no- or reduced tillage can help you meet the conservation goals for your land, contact the NRCS at your local USDA Service Center.



# Holiday Cactus FAQs

Rosie Lerner, Retired Purdue Horticulture specialist

Holiday cacti are not only popular gift plants, but they are also the subject of frequent debate among gardeners. There appears to be much confusion about these unique tropical cacti regarding care, maintenance and, especially, on how to get them to re-bloom. While most folks just lump them all together as Christmas cactus, there are actually distinct species. The following tips address the most frequently asked questions.

The various species of holiday cactus bloom at different times of the year under natural growing conditions and have slightly different growth habits. Christmas cacti have scalloped stem segments and bloom at the stem tips. Thanksgiving cacti have 2-4 pointy teeth along the edges of the sections and will bloom earlier than Christmas cactus if left to natural day-length. Easter cacti have rounded teeth along the segments and bloom primarily in the spring but may also periodically re-bloom at other times of year.

We typically think of cacti as being heat tolerant, but holiday cacti will keep their blossoms longer in cooler temperatures. Keep the plant in a well-lit location away from drafts from heat vents, fireplaces or other sources of hot air. Drafts and temperature extremes can cause the flower buds to drop from the plant before they have a chance to open.

Holiday cactus is a tropical type plant, not quite as drought tolerant as its desert relatives and, in fact, may drop flower buds if the soil gets too dry. The plants will wilt when under drought stress. Water thoroughly when the top inch or so of soil feels dry to the touch. The frequency of watering will vary with the air temperature, amount of light, rate of growth and relative humidity.

Though the holiday cactus can adapt to low light, more abundant blooms are produced on plants that have been exposed to more light intensity. Keep your plants in a sunny location indoors. Plants can be moved outdoors in summer, but keep them in a shady or semi-shady location. Leaves may start to turn a bit red if exposed to excessive light.

If your plant tends to dry out and/or wilt frequently, it may be time to repot the plant into a slightly larger container. Well-drained soil is a must for all of the holiday cacti. Use a commercially packaged potting mix for succulent plants or mix your own by combining two parts plain potting soil with one part clean sand or vermiculite.

Pruning your holiday cactus after blooming will encourage the plant to branch out. Remove a few sections of each stem

by pinching them off with your fingers or cutting with a sharp knife. These sections can be rooted in moist vermiculite to propagate new plants.

About getting that cactus to rebloom in time for next year's holiday – they will bloom if given long, uninterrupted dark periods, about 12 hours each night. Begin the dark treatments in about mid-October to have plants in full bloom by the holidays. Holiday cacti will also bloom if they are subjected to cool temperatures of about 50 to 55 degrees F, eliminating the need for the dark treatments. Plants should be blooming for the holidays if cool treatments are started by early November.

### Thanksgiving Cactus vs Christmas Cactus vs Easter Cactus



**Thanksgiving Cactus**  
*Schlumbergera truncata*  
broad, pointy leaves



**Christmas Cactus**  
*Schlumbergera bridgesii*  
scalloped flat leaves



**Easter Cactus**  
*Hatiora gaertneri*  
rounded scalloped leaves  
with soft hairs



Sunny Home Gardens

# Agriculture & Natural Resources

## Indiana Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training



Registration is \$80 and includes lunch. Registration and more information can be found at <https://bit.ly/pfwcch24>. Registration closes Nov. 12 or when program capacity is reached.

Questions can be directed to James Wolff, agriculture and natural resources educator, at [jmwolff@purdue.edu](mailto:jmwolff@purdue.edu) or 260-481-6434. If you need a

reasonable accommodation to participate in this event, please contact James Wolff at least one week before the program.

Purdue Extension is a leader in providing relevant, high-impact educational programs that transform the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities in Indiana and the world. The Allen County office is located at 4001 Crescent Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46815. More information about Purdue Extension – Allen County can be found at <https://puext.in/allen>.

UPCOMING EVENTS AG IMPORTANT DATES 2024	
NOVEMBER 19	9 AM-3 PM Commercial Pesticide Applicator Workshop, Purdue Fort Wayne Student Union, Union Circle Drive, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815
NOVEMBER 28-29	Thanksgiving - Extension Office Closed
2025	
JANUARY 14-16	2025: Fort Wayne Farm Show, Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, IN
FEBRUARY 12-13	Ag Women Engage Conference, Grand Wayne Center, Fort Wayne, IN
FEBRUARY 24 THRU APRIL 14, 2025	DeKalb/Steuben County Master Gardener Intern Training, Details in Jan/Feb Newsletter



# Agriculture & Natural Resources

## 2024 4-H AT A GLANCE

This was another year for the history books! We broke our record for the second year in a row for the number of 4-H members that went to 4-H Camp. We saw many new faces in the 4-H program as we welcomed many new 4-H'ers to the program. DeKalb County 4-H members were praised by judges at both Summer and Fall for their dedication, knowledge of their projects, and their skills. Everyone should be proud of what they accomplished this year! I know I am proud of everyone, and so thank you for the volunteers who give so

much to the program to help make the best, better!

- Effie Campbell, DeKalb County 4-H Educator

### Top 3 favorite projects

1. Arts & Crafts
2. Construction & Architectural Replica
3. Foods

### Top 3 life skills gained

1. Doing Your Best
2. Problem-Solving
3. Planning/Organizing

### FALL FAIR

1207	Animals exhibited
282	Exhibitors
289	Youth in Battle of the Barns
61	Beef projects
91	Dairy Beef projects
28	Dairy projects
109	Goat projects
317	Poultry projects
398	Rabbit projects
58	Sheep projects
145	Swine projects

## 2024 BATTLE OF THE BARNS CHAMPIONS – POULTRY TEAM 1!!





AUCTION  
INFORMATION

We had a great 4-H Auction this year with great support from the community! For those of you that participated in the auction, be sure to read the information below to know what your next steps are to receive your check.

Very shortly, the Township Auction Chairmen (or the Office) will be sending out letters to each auction participant with a list of the people who donated to your lot, with their addresses.

Youth must write thank-you letters to each donor and turn them in, ready to be mailed, to their Township Auction Chairmen...NOT the Extension Office. Once this is done, your child will receive their check from the auction.

TOWNSHIP AUCTION CHAIRMEN		
Township	Chairman	Phone
Butler/Keyser	Julie Malcolm	260-357-6255
Concord/Spencer/Newville	Melanie McClain	260-437-6172
Fairfield	Tom Orwig	260-541-0068
Franklin	Travis Fry	260-570-3516
Jackson/Union	Mandy Young	260-908-1624
Richland	Stephanie Haynes-Clifford	260-413-2904
Smithfield/Grant	Montana Tiernan	260-235-9230
Wilmington/Stafford/Troy	Abigail Capp	260-573-3741

CHECK DEDUCTION EXPLANATIONS:

1% will be deducted from the check to defray costs of conducting the regular sale (i.e.-postage, checks, sale cards, etc.)

2% will be deducted from the check for a Capital Improvement Fund for improvements to 4-H buildings on the Fairgrounds.



4-H VOLUNTEERS

If you are a 4-H volunteer, don't forget to log into your 4HOnline account and complete your volunteer re-enrollment for 2025

After you have completed the initial Re-enrollment or Enrollment, please go to the Trainings tab to begin your training. Each module must say "Passed" next to it to be considered complete.



CUT THIS OUT AND TAKE IT WITH YOU!

If you bring the flyer with you to the Tip Night,  
DeKalb County 4-H Program receives the 10%!



## FUNDRAISING

»» *Support* ««

**DEKALB COUNTY 4-H  
PROGRAM**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 28  
4PM-8PM**

# 10%

**DONATION NIGHT**

for **DeKalb County 4-H Program.**

Present this flyer at the Auburn  
location and Texas Roadhouse will  
donate **10%** of your total food  
purchases to **DeKalb County 4-H  
Program!**



**260-909-8576  
311 VERITAS DRIVE  
AUBURN, IN**





### Winter Cancellation Policy

Historically, we have followed schools in regards to meeting and event cancellations. If one school canceled for the day, we canceled all events for that day. However, with schools offering e-learning days, we think they will be quicker to react and cancel.

We certainly care about your safety, but want to be mindful that sometimes the fog fades and the snow is cleared by evening. Moving forward from this point on, we will use cautious discretion and/or consult with the Sheriff's Department regarding cancellation of DeKalb County 4-H programs, events, activities, and meetings.



### Noble REMC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



### 4-H Enrollment (State) Fee Reimbursement!

The first 25 youth who enroll in 4-H by Jan. 15, 2025 and whose families are Noble REMC electric customers, can have the State portion of the 4-H Program Fee reimbursed by the REMC. Upon enrolling and paying the Program Fee, a credit voucher can be obtained by contacting the Extension Office. Bring in or mail the voucher to NOBLE REMC for a \$15 bill credit.

## CLOVER HUNT

Find the Black & White 4-H clover logo hidden somewhere within this newsletter. To win the 2024 prize (Clover Wallet, 4-H Sticker, Hat, Gold Button, and Thermos cup), email Effie (campb314@purdue.edu) with the correct description of its location and have the chance to win this month's prize. Winner will be announced on January 15, 2025. Contest open to Mini 4-H and regular 4-H members ONLY. Prize will be available for pick-up at the Extension Office once winner has been notified.



Sample only



## "That's the bee's knees"

**Where it comes from:** This phrase originated in the 1920's when a whole slew of nonsensical expressions popped up, all meaning "incredibly outstanding".

**Do bees actually have knees?** Kind of. Bees have segmented legs, with the segments connected by joints. These joints are often referred to as knees, but some people say that they aren't true knees due to the lack of a knee cap.



## 4-H/Youth Development

### Want to learn how to create a work of art from sketching to framing?

Whether you're new to art or want to improve your skills, this class will guide you while enhancing your mental health through creativity. Let your creativity shine!

**Mondays in November at the Eckhart Park Office**

**\$20 per participant** (includes a full art kit + frame)

**Register by October 28:**

<https://bit.ly/24Art101Register>

Participants must attend all sessions to complete their artwork.



**Art 101:**  
*Embracing Your Creative Mess*

ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE A FINISHED AND FRAMED WORK OF ART!

Grades 6-12 and Adults are welcome!

November 4, 11, 18, 25  
6:00-8:00 pm  
1500 S. Cedar St. Auburn, IN  
Cost - \$20 per participant

Register at [bit.ly/24Art101Register](https://bit.ly/24Art101Register)  
**SIGN UP BY OCT. 28**



**PURDUE UNIVERSITY** Extension - 4-H Youth Development  
Purdue University is an equal opportunity/ equal access/affirmative action institution.



**Sugar, Spice,  
& Everything PIE!**

**Calling all young bakers! Join us for a deliciously fun workshop where we'll whip up pies from scratch. Learn how to make flaky crusts, tasty fillings, and get creative with pie decorations! All ingredients provided—just bring your love for baking! Space is limited, so don't miss your chance to join the pie-making fun!**

**Who:** Best suited for 3rd grade and up  
**When:** November 8th, 2024  
**Where:** Exhibit Hall, 708 S. Union St. Auburn, IN  
**Cost:** \$10 per participant  
**Registration Closes:** November 1st  
**Call 260-925-2562 to register!**

**EA/EOU.** **PURDUE UNIVERSITY** Extension  
If you are in need of accommodations to attend this program, please contact Effie Campbell prior to the workshop at 260-925-2562 or [campb314@purdue.edu](mailto:campb314@purdue.edu).

## SAVE THE DATE

### Upcoming STEAM Workshops

Candy, Candle, & Cards ..... December 19

Woodworking ..... January 28

Canvas Painting ..... February 13

Macrame Workshop ..... March 13

Fish Dissection ..... April 10

A Mom & Me Charcuterie Adventure .. May 8



# 2025 4-H ENROLLMENT

October 1, 2024 thru January 15, 2025

Re-enroll at [v2.4honline.com](http://v2.4honline.com)

**COST: \$25 4-H Fee\*** (Grades 3-12) paid at time of enrollment.

**\$25\*** each for up to three children, **\$10\*** for each additional child.

**\$5** for Mini 4-H (Grades K-2) paid at first meeting in May

4-H Fees are non-refundable and paid at the time of registration.

The fee can be paid online with credit or debit card

OR at the Extension Office with cash or check.

(Extension Office cannot take credit cards).

## 2024 4-H IMPORTANT DATES

<b>October 27</b>	4-H Cloverleafs Club Meeting, Time TBD - 5873 CR 427 Auburn, IN (Horsemen's Association)
<b>October 28</b>	10% Night at Texas Roadhouse (4-H Fundraiser), come in costume! (See page 11)
<b>November 3</b>	Horse & Pony Banquet, 1:00 pm - Exhibit Hall
<b>September 8</b>	4-H Cloverleafs Club Meeting, Time TBD - 5873 CR 427 Auburn, IN (Horsemen's Association)
<b>November 8</b>	Pie Baking Class, 5:00 pm - Exhibit Hall (call the Extension Office to register) (See page 14)
<b>November 4, 11, 18, and 25</b>	Art 101: Embracing Your Creative Mess, 6:00-8:00 pm - Auburn Parks & Recreation (1500 S. Cedar St. Auburn, IN) <a href="https://bit.ly/24Art101Register">https://bit.ly/24Art101Register</a> (See page 14)
<b>November 12, 14, 19, 21</b>	Barn Quilt Creation Workshop, 5:30 pm - County Office Building (215 E. 9th St. Auburn, IN)
<b>November 13</b>	DeKalb County 4-H Council Meeting, 7:00 pm -Exhibit Hall

## SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER, WINTER BLUES AND SELF-CARE TIPS TO GET AHEAD OF SYMPTOMS

The cooler weather and less daylight during the winter months can cause many of us to feel less motivated and even disengaged in everyday life. Some of us may experience the winter blues, while others may have **seasonal affective disorder (SAD)**.

Seasonal affective disorder is considered a depressive disorder – a subtype of major depression with seasonal changes. This means that it starts in autumn and lasts through the winter months, improving in the spring.

**About 5% of Americans have SAD.** Women are four times more likely to experience it. Additionally, people who live in northern states, like the Pacific Northwest, Alaska and New England, tend to experience seasonal affective disorder more.

Seasonal affective disorder can begin at any age. It typically starts between ages 18 and 30.

### SYMPTOMS OF SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)

SAD is different than major depression in that it's specifically tied to the seasons. SAD typically starts in autumn and lasts through the winter, improving in the springtime.

People with seasonal affective disorder experience the cluster of symptoms that may include the following, **according to the American Psychiatric Association:**

- Feeling sad
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities you typically enjoy
- Changes in appetite (typically eating more and craving carbohydrates and sugars)
- Change in sleep (usually sleeping too much)
- Loss of energy or feeling more tired despite a good amount of sleep
- Slowed thinking, concentration or decision making



- Increase in activities like pacing, hand-wringing or inability to sit still, or slowed movements or speech
- Feeling hopeless, worthless or guilty
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Weight gain and too much sleep, known as hypersomnia, are very common with SAD. The more severe symptoms include hopelessness, worthlessness, and thoughts of suicide.

### DIAGNOSIS OF SAD

The diagnosis of SAD includes:

- Meeting criteria for changes in your thinking or daily functions (going to work, going to social events)
- How you feel emotionally and physically

To be diagnosed with SAD, you must meet diagnostic criteria and experience a functional decline in many areas of your life.

When a patient comes for an evaluation, they often say that they're having mood changes, experiencing a decline in function, and not feeling like themselves. Patients are often encouraged to get a medical evaluation first. This is to ensure there are no other underlying conditions that could contribute to weight gain, too much sleep or difficulty thinking, for example. There could be something else going on inside the body that could be causing those symptoms.

Patients are asked about other areas of their life, like what typically causes the onset of SAD. They're also asked about a change in their mood, thinking or functioning at certain times. Most people can pinpoint that, especially with the change in daylight saving time.

If you have any symptoms listed above during the winter months, you should be evaluated by a health care provider.



## TREATMENT AND SELF-CARE FOR SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

If you've been diagnosed with SAD, your treatment plan may include a combination of light therapy, vitamin D supplement, cognitive behavior therapy and possibly medication.

Self-care is key with SAD because it tends to take on a predictable pattern. This means patients can implement prevention strategies in anticipation of severe symptoms. If you have seasonal affective disorder, there are some things you can do to help get ahead of your symptoms:

- Make a habit of getting out for a daily walk. This helps your mood by breathing in fresh air and providing a change in scenery, all while exercising.

- Add vitamin D into your diet and nutritional changes. Consult with a nutritionist or physician on what kinds of things you should target in your diet or what you should increase.

- Plan fun activities and stick to those commitments. Once SAD begins, you're more likely to pull back and cancel plans.

- Get social with friends and family. This helps stimulate your mind and mood by being around others.

- Move your body with physical activity. It doesn't have to be hard exercise, but moving your body will provide physical stimulation. If you can participate in an exercise group or class, that allows you to get physical and social benefits.

- Reach out to your support network. Tell your family and friends how this change of season affects you so they can check in on you. They can also help hold you accountable to your commitments and support you.



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE "WINTER BLUES" AND SAD?

"Winter blues" typically happen every now and then during the colder months. You may feel sad or want to stay home, but you're still able to function. For example, you decide to cancel social plans to stay home but still take interest in your normal activities, like watching TV or crafting. You may just want to hunker down inside more and not be around others.

The next day, you may be able to go out and engage with friends or coworkers. You still enjoy life, but you may pull back a little bit.

"Winter blues" could also be related to some sort of external stressor, like a death during the holidays.

Seasonal affective disorder is a more prevalent pattern, where a person loses interest in many areas of their life. With SAD, you want to stay home but you don't want to watch the shows you like or eat your favorite foods. You withdraw from life on a global scale.

What's tricky about SAD is it gets better in the spring. People may not seek treatment because they may consider it merely the "winter blues" which is less severe and happens on occasion. But SAD is a major depression with seasonal patterns, which is the official diagnosis – it's more serious than just the "winter blues."

If you experience some of these symptoms, consider **talking to your health care provider. SAD can improve with proper treatment.**

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call or text **988** or **explore the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.**

Source: <https://health.ucdavis.edu/blog/cultivating-health/seasonal-affective-disorder-winter-blues-and-self-care-tips-to-get-ahead-of-symptoms/2023/11>

# MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND THE MOVEMBER MOVEMENT

In a world that encourages men to be strong, discussing the stigma around men's mental health becomes crucial. Have you heard of "Movember" and "No-Shave November"? These special movements focus on information about men's health, especially their mental well-being and the wider effects of cancer.

### The Stigma Surrounding Men's Mental Health

Traditionally, society expects men to be strong and resilient, discouraging them from showing vulnerability. Unfortunately, this cultural expectation has led to a negative stigma surrounding men's mental health.

Statistically, "men tend to fall into dangerous, self-destructive behaviors rather than seek professional help for their mental health" (1800runaway). Men often hesitate to seek assistance because they fear others will perceive them as weak.

Acenda therapist, Anthony Bisti, MSW, LSW, LCADC states, "in my professional experience, men are just as capable as women at expressing their thoughts and emotions when they get in the therapy room, and their need to do so is just as great."

Even though mental disorders are less common in men than in women, both genders are diagnosed at similar rates, and in some cases, men even have higher diagnosis rates. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that "men are less likely to have received mental health treatment than women in the past year" (NIMH). Movember, initially focused on prostate cancer awareness, has evolved to challenge the narrative around men's mental health.

### MOVEMBER AND NO-SHAVE NOVEMBER: A DUAL IMPACT

Movember, originating in Australia in 2003, was established to raise awareness about prostate cancer and men's mental health. Participants grow mustaches during November to spark conversations about these critical issues. In addition to its focus on mental health, Movember addresses stereotypes around masculinity and encourages men to seek help.

**No-Shave November**, founded in 2009, takes a broader approach, aiming to raise cancer awareness in general. In November, people grow their hair and refrain from grooming as they normally would. Instead, they donate the money they would have spent on shaving to the American Cancer Society.

Both Movember and No-Shave November contribute to breaking the stigma surrounding men's mental health.

### MOVEMBER'S MISSION

Movember started as a campaign to grow mustaches and raise awareness for prostate cancer. However, it has now evolved to challenge traditional notions of masculinity. The mustache serves as more than facial hair; it sparks conversations and confronts stereotypes surrounding men's mental health.

This month is about breaking the stigma associated with men's mental health. Organizations like 'R U OK?' have developed strategies like "ALEC" to navigate tough conversations:

**Ask:** Initiate a conversation about well-being.

**Listen:** Provide a safe space for individuals to express their thoughts and feelings.

**Encourage Action:** Emphasize taking steps toward seeking help or positive changes.

**Check-In:** Remind individuals they are not alone, fostering ongoing support.

For more insights and resources on starting conversations about mental health, visit Movember's official website. Movember offers practice conversations to help individuals discuss various topics related to their male friends, from signs of withdrawal to balancing work and family.

Take the first step towards better mental health this Movember. Talking about it is a sign of strength. Break the silence and let's make this Movember a month of positive change for men's mental health.

Source: <https://acendahealth.org/mens-mental-health-challenges-and-the-movember-movement/>



# Mental Health Matters: The Power of Gratitude Practice

## THE POWER OF GRATITUDE: A KEY TO GREATER HAPPINESS

November has arrived, and with it comes a profound opportunity for us, as Rotarians, to celebrate and champion the spirit of gratitude. In the heart of this month, we find a powerful reminder of the importance of giving thanks for the blessings we have and the good we can do. One of those often underrated factors is gratitude. Let's explore the science behind it.

## THE SCIENCE OF GRATITUDE

Research has shown that practicing gratitude can lead to increased happiness and overall well-being. Here's how it works:

1. **Boosts Positive Emotions:** When we take the time to acknowledge and appreciate the good things in our lives, it stimulates positive emotions. Gratitude can create a ripple effect of joy.
2. **Strengthens Relationships:** Expressing gratitude to others, whether through a heartfelt thank-you or a simple note, strengthens social bonds. This, in turn, contributes to greater happiness.

3. **Reduces Stress:** Gratitude can be a powerful stress-reducer. Focusing on positive aspects of life can help combat the effects of stress and anxiety.

4. **Improves Sleep:** A grateful mindset has been linked to better sleep quality. When you're at peace with your day and life, you're more likely to sleep soundly.

5. **Enhances Resilience:** Gratitude can help individuals cope with challenging situations and build resilience. It provides a positive perspective that enables people to bounce back from setbacks.

## HOW TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

It's not hard to start incorporating gratitude into your daily life. Here are a few simple practices:

1. **Keep a Gratitude Journal:** Each day, write down a few things you're thankful for. This helps you focus on the positive aspects of your life.
2. **Express Your Thanks:** Don't hesitate to tell the people in your life that you appreciate them. A heartfelt thank-you can go a long way.

3. **Meditate on Gratitude:** Spend a few minutes in meditation, focusing on the things you're grateful for. It's a calming and centering practice.

4. **Notice the Little Things:** Pay attention to the small joys in your daily life, from a delicious meal to a beautiful sunset.

By making gratitude a part of your routine, you can boost your happiness and overall mental well-being.

The science is clear: gratitude is a simple yet potent way to enhance our happiness and well-being. By acknowledging the good things in life, we can create a positive and more fulfilling existence. Together, as Rotarians, we can make November a time of not only giving thanks but also giving back, leaving an indelible mark on our world.

Source: <https://rotary5150.org/stories/mental-health-matters-the-power-of-gratitude-practice>

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Award sponsors' information is attached to the award that you received.

## 7 STEPS TO A GREAT THANK YOU NOTE

1

A greeting to the thank you note recipient

2

Specific reason you are thanking them

3

The reason you appreciate them

4

How you plan to use the gift or why the gift was important to you

5

A comment or detail about yourself

6

A repeat of your thank you

7

A closing and signature of your name

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