

What's sunlight? I forget!

by Katie Zellars
staff writer

Feeling tired, moody or just plain sad and you don't know why? Would you believe that it might be the weather?

It's surprising but true an estimated 25 percent of the population suffers from a minor case of SAD, seasonal affective disorder, that is caused by the lack of sunlight during the winter months.

According to weatherbase.com, on average, Erie receives only 63 clear days a year. When told this, most students were surprised. From November through March, there are only a total of 13 clear days. That is only four days more than the single month of August, which averages nine clear days.

Medical research has proven that lack of sunlight can cause health problems. The National Mental Health Association says that the hormone melatonin is produced in increased levels of darkness. Melatonin is linked to some symptoms of depression. During the winter months of little sunshine and shorter days, the hormone is produced more, which can cause the onset of SAD.

SAD is most prevalent during January and February when the days are short and the weather is the worst. It also occurs at any age, but the ages of 18 to 30 years

are when SAD normally starts, meaning that students are at a high risk for the illness.

Symptoms of SAD include depression, sleep problems, lethargy, overeating, anxiety, mood changes, decreased sexual interest, social problems and a weakened immune system.

Sophomore April Ames does admit that winter makes her feel more tired. "Getting up in the morning and it still being dark outside doesn't help things either," she said.

best solution is to try and get as much light as possible.

Light therapy for SAD has been successful in 85 percent of diagnosed patients. Regular outside exercise has been proven to help depression. A study has also found that one hour spent walking in the winter sunlight is equivalent to two and a half hours indoors in artificial light.

Recent partly sunny days have given students some hope that winter will end eventually. Freshman Jen Bragan said, "I was

pretty happy walking to practice the other day. The sun was out, the hood was off." Ames was thrilled when she saw some robins last week during a sunny day. "Seeing the robins definitely made me happy," she said.

For now students will have to hang in there for a few more weeks until the first day of spring. Then those days arrive when they can finally go to the beach, drive with their windows down, and spend time enjoying the outdoors.

Not all students have negative sentiments towards the winter though. "I love our winter season. When the sun comes out and melts my snow, I'm pissed," said student Rick Hinman.

Strangely enough Hinman is going to Florida for spring break, along with some other students who are looking forward to the sun.

If one suffers from SAD, then sun is a definite cure. Normally the symptoms of the disorder go away around April and May when spring arrives. But for now the



Behrend students walk to class bathed in sunlight. What are the odds of

PHOTOGRAPH FROM WWW.PSERIE.PSU.EDU

Through the looking glass

by Mike Pingree, KRT Campus

A HONEYMOON TO REMEMBER

Authorities in Stavanger, Norway, agreed to allow a psychiatric patient to marry his girlfriend and go on a brief honeymoon even though he was institutionalized as a menace to society.

After a wedding under heavy security, the couple was taken to a hotel room for a stay of a few hours, and the guards discreetly withdrew. The newlyweds immediately escaped, robbed a convenience store and went on a drunken bender before being recaptured downtown.

SORRY, YOU'LL BE GETTING A DISCOUNT

A man in England complained to the gas company that he had been overcharged. The company investigated and agreed that it had mistakenly billed him for the gas "used up during the explosion that blew his house to pieces."

THIS MAKES IT A BIT MORE CONVENIENT

A man in Michigan almost rear-ended a police car then failed to pull over and led the cops on a high-speed chase.

It all came to an end when the driver pulled into the parking lot of the jail because he figured his arrest was inevitable. He was right.

CAPTAIN RIBMAN in Tele-Visions

by Sprengelmeyer & Davis



DITHERED TWITS

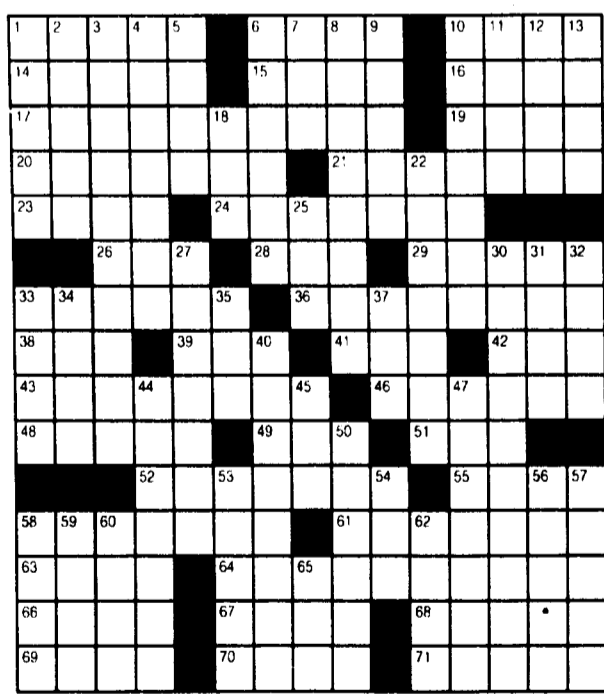
by Stan Waling



'Shoeless' Joe left an indelible mark on baseball. Not to be outdone, baseball left an indelible mark on 'Cupless' Tom.

Crossword

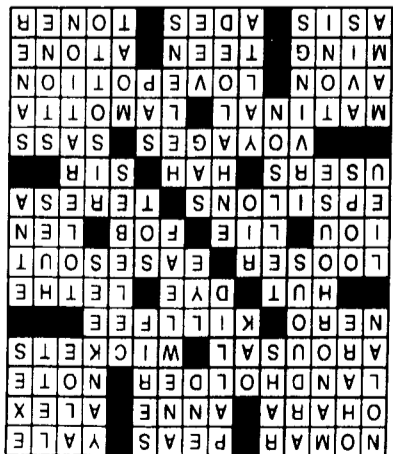
- ACROSS
- 1 Ballplayer
 - 6 Pod contents
 - 10 Linus of locks
 - 14 "Lovely Childs" author
 - 15 Actress Archer
 - 16 Haley or Trebek
 - 17 Person of property
 - 19 Musical symbol
 - 20 Stimulation
 - 21 Cricket targets
 - 23 Roman tyrant
 - 24 Money paid for unpublished work
 - 26 Crude shelter
 - 28 Recolor
 - 29 River of Hades
 - 33 More relaxed
 - 36 Removes with caution
 - 38 Debt letters
 - 39 Prevarication
 - 41 Pocket-watch accessory
 - 42 Author Deighton
 - 43 Greek letters
 - 46 Mother ... of Calcutta
 - 48 PC operators
 - 49 Scoffer's comment
 - 51 McKellen's title
 - 52 Long journeys
 - 55 Mouth off
 - 58 Of the morning
 - 61 "Raging Bull" boxer
 - 63 Severn tributary
 - 64 Passion arouser
 - 66 Yao of the Rockets
 - 67 Adolescent
 - 68 Make amends
 - 69 Yard-sale warning words
 - 70 Fruity drinks
 - 71 Skin cream



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- DOWN
- 1 Fastballer Ryan
 - 2 Chicago airport
 - 3 Seat of an estate
 - 4 Difficult
 - 5 Cheers from the bleachers
 - 6 Lacking vitality
 - 7 Finish
 - 8 1971 Matthau movie
 - 9 Base for a letter
 - 10 Bronx nine
 - 11 Cosmetic ingredient
 - 12 Riga resident
 - 13 Former spouses
 - 18 ... Ridge, TN
 - 22 Sulawesi
 - 25 Potash
 - 27 Squeals
 - 30 Indulgence
 - 31 Tints
 - 32 Sicilian spouter
 - 33 In ... of Klutz's comment
 - 35 ... Grande
 - 37 Rummy
 - 40 Circled like a saint
 - 44 Washington and John
 - 45 Droop
 - 47 Italian dish
 - 50 Hunt and Reddy
 - 53 Crimean resort
 - 54 Gullible person
 - 56 Scree element
 - 57 More rational
 - 58 Cradle call
 - 59 Rara ...
 - 60 Morrison or Braxton
 - 62 Castle defense
 - 65 Two-finger sign

Solutions



Looking at the Atkins diet

by Brian Mitchell
staff writer

In the mid 1970s, Dr. Atkins came out with a protein diet which has grown to be one of the most popular methods of weight loss. He has successfully treated more than 60,000 people who followed his diet, with each subject experiencing some beneficial health, as well.

If one wants to lose weight, the Atkins' diet is one way to go. Though it causes significant amount of weight loss, it also makes one feel and become healthier.

The Atkins' diet restricts carbohydrates (CHO) from people's diet such as bread, pasta, potatoes, etc, in order to lose weight. However, a dieter is allowed 20g of CHO a day, which is equivalent to a few pieces of lettuce or a little less than an apple. An Atkins' diet is basically limited to complete protein products: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and cheese. Since CHO is the first energy burned in the body, the body goes into ketosis when there is no glycogen in the liver. This causes the body to break down muscle mass in order for the brain to function. The body learns to burn fat as energy because it has no CHO to use. This is how Atkins' dieters always stay thin.

The Atkins' diet has a four-phase phase program.

For the first two weeks, individuals consume no more than 20g of CHO a day.

After the first stage, individuals start to increase CHO levels by five grams a week.

When individuals get close to their weight goal, they add another 10 grams of CHO per week as long as they do not begin to gain weight. At this point, individuals get used to maintenance, though weight loss is very slow at this time.

The final step is lifetime maintenance, which is usually between 40 and 100g of CHO a week.

The diet has many positive results. Though burning fat out of one's cells causes significant weight loss, it helps Type 2 diabetics and other health concerns. Type 2 diabetics see improvements in their blood lipid profiles which causes them to rely less on their medications to maintain proper health. The fewer the CHO consumed, the more sustained the blood sugar level remains throughout the day because the body metabolizes sugar first.

The diet also improves cholesterol and blood pressure level, and it helps alleviate some problems (fatigue, irritability, depression, chronic head-

aches, and some form of joint and muscle pains.

Diets high in starches and sugars increase the body's production of insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced by the beta cells of the islets of Langerhans of the pancreas that regulate the metabolism of glucose and other nutrients. When insulin levels are high, the body quickly turns the food into fat which is the form of triglycerides. High triglycerides levels are one of the greatest risk factors of heart disease. The Atkins' diet seems to have more benefits than other weight loss diets.

Doug McConahy, an RA in Lawrence, is a resent Atkins' dieter who started his sophomore year in high school. He says that the diet was a big success and dieters should go on it if they want quicker results though it is not an overnight success. He lost 60 pounds after completing the diet with no health problems. He actually felt healthier and more athletic when he played football. He would recommend this diet to anyone concerned about his or her weight; however, he suggests on should talk to a physician before practicing the diet.

Have something to say?
send all letters to:
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