

Winter Solstice hits hard as average Brit will see just 30 minutes of sunlight today

Submitted by: Lucre Marketing Ltd

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The average Briton will get just 30 minutes of daylight today, the shortest day of the year. On December 21st, the sun will rise at 8.03am and set at 3.52pm, giving us just seven hours and 49 minutes of daylight.

For the average working Brit though, tucked away in their office, daylight will be harder to come by and those living in Belfast, Liverpool and Swansea, will be the hardest hit. People in Belfast will see just 15 minutes of daylight, with Liverpool close behind on 16 minutes, and Swansea on 19 minutes.

Those living in Wolverhampton, Newcastle and Coventry have a slightly brighter outlook and are expected to get more daylight on average today. People in Wolverhampton will see an average of 68 minutes, followed by Newcastle with 55 minutes and Coventry with 50 minutes. This is still way short of the five hours and 16 minutes of daylight people say they need to function well and be happy.

Unsurprisingly, the study commissioned by Jet2holidays has found 84 per cent state they suffer some sort of winter malaise, with 57 per cent of people feeling more tired due to lack of sunlight and 40 per cent saying their mood is impacted negatively. The study by the UK's second largest tour operator has been designed to show the impact that a lack of sunlight has on us.

On average, 33 per cent of people claim they have suffered or are suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), also known as "winter depression".

The Jet2holidays study also found:

- 45 per cent of people struggle to get up in the morning during winter;
- 36 per cent feel lethargic and tired due to lack of sunlight;
- 33 per cent find it depressing going to work and coming home in the dark;
- 26 per cent say their partner is negatively affected by lack of daylight.

When it comes to helping alleviate these blues, the Jet2holidays survey found:

- 50 per cent of people try and go for a walk on a lunchtime;
- 34 per cent book a holiday abroad;
- 24 per cent eat healthier;
- 18 per cent purchase an SAD light;
- 17 per cent book more days off work;
- 6 per cent will pull a "sickie".

The survey also found 23 per cent of Britons think we should work a four-day week to feel better during the winter, whilst 22 per cent think the clocks should be changed to see more sunlight in either the morning or evening.

Jet2holidays also found the top destinations people would like to escape to for some winter sun. These included the Canary Islands, Spain and Portugal.

Kate Cook, Nutrition and Wellness Expert, comments: "The relationship between sunlight and our natural circadian rhythms is critical. Exposure to sunlight affects our alertness levels and how we feel. Disruption of these important rhythms produces changes in our metabolism, which impact on our moods. This is never more evident than in the dark months of winter when Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is more common. The nature of SAD varies from person to person.

"It is essential, therefore, to find positive ways to motivate yourself in the winter months. For some people this will be exercise and eating healthy, and for others it might be about socialising and avoiding time alone. Holidays in warmer and sunnier climates will certainly provide the body and mind with a much-needed boost. What is crucial is that if people feel adversely affected by the dark nights that they talk to someone like their GP."

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays said: "The winter solstice will be a drag for many people today, who leave for work in the dark and leave the office in the dark. As we enter the longest days of winter, it is the thought of booking a holiday and some winter sun that keeps us going and we are expecting a busy few time of bookings as people look ahead to some well-deserved sunshine."

Top 10 cities and towns getting least sunlight on December 21st:

- 1)Belfast (15 minutes)
- 2)Liverpool (16 minutes)
- 3)Swansea (19 minutes)
- 4)Plymouth (20 minutes)
- 5)Oxford (22 minutes)
- 6)Aberystwyth (23 minutes)
- 7)Glasgow (24 minutes)
- 8)Southampton (25 minutes)
- 9)Sheffield (26 minutes)
- 10)Cardiff (27 minutes)

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For further media enquiries:

Contact the Jet2.com Press Office on 0113 243 1355 or email pressoffice@Jet2.com