

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

# Is there really something called Spring Fever?

I have often wondered — and perhaps you have too — is there really such a thing as “Spring Fever”? Or is it simply a myth?

There does seem to be a kind of universal human reaction to Spring going back into the mists of time. Some have tied this phenomenon to our ancient ancestors who were relieved to have finally made it through the cold dark winter. It was then described as a time of transition and a renewal of the spirit.

Writers and poets have long associated Spring Fever with romance. A magical, wonderful time in April and May for falling love. A time for feeling young, for daydreaming, for being idle with hearts aflutter. Wow!

Still the question persists: Is Spring Fever a real condition or simply the product of our collective imaginations?

Interestingly, medical science has identified

something similar to Spring Fever. It is referred to as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. Oh my, just what we need — another “condition”!



**Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick**

But Seasonal Affective Disorder is real. It is a form of seasonal depression that starts in winter and is thought to be the result of a lack of exposure to sunlight due to shorter days. The reduction in sunlight exposure affects the endocrine system, which causes changes in the production of serotonin, melatonin, and other hormones.

Research has shown that this can have a profoundly negative impact on our mood and on

our energy levels. Seasonal Affective Disorder is characterized by lethargy, sleepiness during the daytime, feeling tired, and even negative thoughts leading to a gloomy disposition or anxiety.

On the other hand, the symptoms of Spring Fever, while similar, seem to be more about a lack of focus and motivation, feeling listless, with mood swings from giddiness to a kind of wistful melancholy. Plus, medical research seems to suggest that as the season changes and temperatures warm, and with longer days and more sunlight, our sleeping and eating habits change.

That is the science. But it begs the question. Must we define everything through the prism of the scientific method?

Maybe after the long winter — and particularly when you consider the events of the preceding year — we all need an emotional break. And I have a suggestion.

One I intend to follow. Let us embrace this new bright season as a time for personal renewal, of finding the joy in life, and of love. If you find yourself needing a walk in the warm sunshine, or sitting and reading a good book, or playing as a child with your children, or discov-

ering again that sense of well-being that comes with...well...just “being” I say go for it. We all deserve a good dose of “Spring Fever”! If you have any questions, call us. Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support. Happy Spring!

*Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine.*

*For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809, or click to [grandoaksdental.com](http://grandoaksdental.com) or visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrandOaksDental>.*

## Five little words

Recently, I heard the five little words that I have longed to hear my whole life. No, not, “You could gain some weight,” although if someone ever tells me that, I already have a plan consisting of German chocolate cake and all kinds of cheese. I had a little surgery recently, and what the doctor



**Kim von Keller**

told me afterward sent me over the moon:

“You can never run again.”

Halle-Nike-lujah. I hate running.

Running has existed as a sport for almost as long as people have had legs. We’ve all read the history of the marathon, where a soldier ran from the Greek city of the same name to Athens to report a military victory over the Persians. The soldier’s name was Pheidippides, and he died almost immediately after delivering the good news. They don’t tell you that in the ads for running shoes, do they?

My hatred of running does not mean that I hate exercise. I actually enjoy exercise, and I’ve kept up with regular fitness routines since I was in my 20s. I started with The Firm Workout program of cardio and weights. I was a big Reebok stepper in the ‘90s. I did Bhangra dance workouts, Latin dance workouts, tap-dance workouts, and Zumba. I have a universal gym, a stability ball, a weighted hula-hoop, and some assorted thigh gizmos, the names of which I do not know. My friends who run marathons find my workouts silly, but after their 26.2-mile run, they often report shin splints, stress fractures,

blisters, dehydration, and nausea. Meanwhile, after I finish an hour in front of the television doing the cha-cha while incorporating some bicep curls, I can report that Erin and Ben from “Home Town” are adorable and that Regina King was an awesome “Saturday Night Live” host.

To the runners out there, I salute you. I tried to join your ranks once, but I dismissed the idea after my first attempt. On a family vacation long ago, my sister, Lisa, asked me to go running with her on the beach. While I have mentioned her often in this column, I have probably never mentioned that she is almost 6 inches taller than me, tall enough to have competed on the T.L. Hanna track team as a hurdler back in the day. The problem with accompanying her on that run, though, is that no matter how fast I ran, I couldn’t make up for the leg-length difference. Wanting to stay with me, she literally ran in circles around me as I ran in a straight line. I couldn’t have been more embarrassed on that beach if I had been in a swimsuit three sizes too small.

Luckily, there are plenty of things I CAN do post-surgery. I can return to hiking, one of my favorite activities because there’s always a picnic in the middle, in a few months. I no longer have to rely on elevators as I’m now climbing steps like a pro. I can walk on my treadmill for two episodes of “A Million Little Things,” and by the time I attend a family wedding in August, I’ll be mambo-ready for the dance floor. As long as nothing ever chases me — or the Sweetery never has a limited-time only sale on German chocolate cake — I can look forward to never, ever running again.



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