

Ease Your Body into Daylight Saving Time

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How well do you adjust to setting the clock ahead or back?
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This Sunday, March 8, we'll "spring forward" as we move to Daylight Saving Time. How well do you adjust to setting the clock ahead or back?

"Even though your brain knows that the time on the clock has changed, your body's internal clock does not," says **Franci Cohen, a New York City exercise physiologist and certified nutritionist.** "When the clocks move forward in the spring, you're robbed of an hour's sleep. That night, you may not be able to fall into your normal sleep rhythms an hour earlier than you're used to, and you may not get as much quality sleep as you need."

Cohen suggests these strategies for sailing through the time zone transition:

- **Exercise.** "Working out releases serotonin, a chemical in the brain that helps our bodies adjust," Cohen says. "Exercise regularly, early in the day and preferably outdoors to increase your body's levels of Vitamin D. A brisk morning walk is perfect. Avoid exercising too late in the evening, which can interfere with the quality of your sleep."
- **Limit caffeine.** One or two cups of coffee in the morning is fine, but you know that caffeine later in the day disrupt your sleep.

- **Be proactive.** A few days before the time change, move dinner time up by an hour. That may help your body to adjust.”
- **Eat breakfast.** “Skipping breakfast will make you feel more fatigued, potentially causing you to rely on caffeine and sugary foods and set you up for a major energy crash later in the day,” Cohen notes. To boost energy, good breakfast choices include oatmeal, plain yogurt, apples, avocados and fruit and veggie smoothies.
- **Bring a snack.** “Munch on some raw almonds,” Cohen advises. “They are loaded with potassium and iron, which help us stay energized.” If you’re not nuts about nuts, Cohen suggests grapes, peaches or sunflower seeds.
- **Avoid heavy or spicy foods.** Especially at night, these foods may cause heartburn, making it difficult for you to sleep.
- **Limit alcohol.** “Over-consumption of your favorite adult beverages may cause a very restless uncomfortable night,” Cohen says.
- **Eat late-night cherries.** Rich in vitamins, cherries contain melatonin, a substance found in the human body that helps regulate sleep. “Eating fresh or dried cherries before you go to bed at night may help you sleep better,” adds Cohen.

Cohen cautions you from using the extra hour of daylight to stretch your workday. “Stick to your quitting time,” she recommends. “Use that daylight to squeeze in a workout.”