

TIPS FOR SURVIVING DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Set Your Clock for Good Sleep

Starting and ending Daylight Saving Time can play havoc with sleep.

Find out how to reset your sleep clock.

Turning the clock forward or back for Daylight Saving Time is always hard. Losing an hour in the spring can leave you groggy for weeks while the extra hour in the fall can feel like a windfall – but can disrupt your sleep nonetheless. Follow these tips to get through time change sleep disruption so that when morning comes you're ready to face the day.

Make a sleep pact

Make a deal with yourself that you're going to plan for 7 to 8 hours of sleep every day, even if the day is an hour shorter. Work backwards from the time you need to get up and set your bedtime. Setting aside time to get the sleep you need is a gift you can give yourself. Once you've set a bedtime, stick with it so that it becomes part of your routine.

Blueprint for bedtime

To help adjust to the spring time change, start preparing for it several days in advance, going to bed 15 minutes earlier each day. Time changes are also a good cue to evaluate your bedroom. Make sure it is dark, quiet and cool at night so you have the best setting for sleep. Prepare for better sleep by creating a relaxing bedtime ritual like taking a bath, reading a book or listening to music.

Develop an appetite for good sleep

Eating and drinking can actually disrupt your sleep. Plan to finish meals and snacks 2 to 3 hours before bedtime because digestion wakes up your body. Alcohol and caffeine are also sleep interrupters when consumed before bed. Limit caffeine to the morning and finish your alcohol consumption by early evening. Smoking before bed can also stimulate your body and make it hard to sleep.

When you wake up each morning refreshed and relaxed, your whole day is already off to a great start. Your bedroom plays a key role in getting the sleep your body needs, but it's more than just a room for sleeping. It's

more than just a room for sleeping. It's also a place where you and your family unwind, so it needs to be comfortable and friendly.

Be firm with your mattress

Your mattress is what gets you through the night and transports you to dreamland. When your mattress gets old, it no longer gives you the support and comfort you need for restful sleep. If your mattress is seven years old, it is time to replace it with a newer one that meets your current sleep needs. Don't forget to replace your pillows too. Pillows lose their firmness and stop supporting your neck and spine. The twice annual time change is a good time to evaluate your mattress and pillows to determine if it is time to replace them.

Daytime steps to good sleep

Staying active during the day will help your body crave sleep at night. Even a walk can help you sleep better. Be sure to end your workout 2 hours before you head to bed so your body has time to relax. A short 20-minute nap during the day can also prepare you for a good night. Short naps like these can help your body adjust to the time change and help you feel ready for sleep at your normal bedtime. Be sure to expose yourself to lots of bright light throughout the daytime to help your body know it is time to be alert.



Help your kids sleep like a baby after a time change

- **Baby steps.** Gradually adjust your child's nap and sleep times by 10 to 15 minutes each day before the time change so the shift is more gradual for them. Move it earlier leading up to the spring time change and later leading up to the fall time change.
- **Normal night-nights.** Having a regular bedtime routine can help your child be ready to drift off. Following regular steps from dinnertime to bedtime will help your child slow things down and be ready to snuggle up. Stick to the routine even as the time changes so that your child understands what's expected.
- **Keep them in the dark.** Even if it is still light outside when you're putting your child to bed, make sure his room is completely dark to encourage sleep. Room-darkening blinds keep the light out at night and can be opened in the morning to wake the body up.
- **Dial it down.** Keep your child's room cool so his body wants to sleep. Babies should sleep in sleep sacks or pajamas heavy enough to keep them warm while older kids can snuggle up with a comfy blanket.
- **Breathe deeply.** Although the book *Go the #\$\$% to Sleep* might realistically express your frustration with

your kids at night, remember that they're just listening to the cues their bodies are giving them when they have trouble falling or staying asleep. Work on making changes to the environment, schedule or routine that will help their bodies sleep.

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