

The end of Daylight Savings Time: does it upset your biological clock?



On the night of 26 to 27 October, the clock will be set back one hour. It is the end of Daylight Savings Time and will last for five months. It will be nice to be able to sleep an hour longer that night or to have an hour more to read the newspaper. But at the same time, your biological clock seems to get briefly upset and it is more difficult to get to sleep and to wake up. Then comes the period of long, cold and dark winter months. How about hibernation? Absolutely not! That biological clock will give you a helping hand and, before you know it, it's Daylight Saving Time again. How should you best deal with the one-hour time difference?

A few tips:

Light

When it gets light, your body gets a signal from your biological clock. The stress hormone, cortisol, peaks and wakes you up. If the clock is not set back, then this all happens an hour later and the morning will be over before you know it. If it's not light yet, turn on enough lights. The light helps you to wake up well. Make sure you get enough light during the day by going outside. That also provides you with the necessary vitamin D.

In the evening, you do everything the other way around. Dim your lights, light some candles and go to bed on time. With less light, you give your body the chance to produce the hormone melatonin which enables you to sleep well. In addition, this hormone causes your body temperature and blood pressure to drop, your heart rate to slow down and you to get sleepy. Sleep well 😊.

Regularity

Get up in the morning at fixed times and go to bed at night at fixed times, as much as possible.

Get out and about!

In winter there is plenty to do outdoors, even when it is cold and there may be snow. Go outside, because exercise improves the functioning of your biological clock. But it does a lot more. It is good for your overall health, makes you fit and stronger, provides relaxation and ensures good quality sleep. Just be careful about exerting yourself too much right before going to bed. That can make it difficult to fall asleep.

Enjoy!

The clock is going to be set back an hour. This means you can sleep one hour longer. You could also do what you normally do and get up at the same time. Then you can do something fun for yourself during this 'extra' hour, like taking a walk or doing yoga.

How long will it take you to get used to the one-hour time difference?

The length of time it takes people to adapt varies from person to person. The internal clock of people who are in balance, adapts relatively quickly to the new rhythm. Good sleepers or morning people can often easily cope with this transition.

It may help to make the transition gradually and to start adjusting to the time difference a few days earlier. For example, do it for about 15 minutes a day.

More information?

Would you like to know more about biorhythm and sleep?

Take a look at My Health, take a Masterclass in Biorhythm from the KLM Running Programme or go to a Sleep Workshop.