

Daylight saving time: How to handle your sleep when it ends Sunday

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Let's face it, most of us don't get enough sleep even though we're very aware of just how important it is for our physical, mental and emotional health.

And while getting in the recommended seven to nine [hours of sleep](#) a night is a struggle for many adults at all times of the year, adjusting clocks due to daylight saving time can pose an even greater challenge for bedtime routines, said Dr. Aneesa Das, a pulmonologist with the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center who specializes in [sleep medicine](#).

Daylight saving time will end at 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, when clocks will have to be turned back one hour.

"Daylight saving is probably a bigger issue than most people think," Das said. "People are chronically sleep-deprived, and adjusting our sleep even further - like in the spring, we lose a whole hour - further augments this [sleep deprivation](#)."

Research has shown that to be the case, Das continued, citing studies that show how people experience an 11% increase in depressive mood symptoms after the fall change.

While Das admits the "fall back" time change that will happen in the early hours of Sunday morning is a bit easier than the one in the spring - it comes with an extra hour of sleep - she recommends people still be aware of how the event might affect them or their family.

And that might be all the more important this year as many people's routines have been disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. Sleep affects the [immune system](#) as well as people's response to vaccines, Das said.

Here are some tips she offers to combat sleep issues when clocks change for daylight saving:

Take a look at light exposure

Das said people's internal clocks reset every day through sunlight, so she recommends increasing exposure to natural light. On the flip side, it's best to limit artificial light, such as from a cellphone, in the dark hours leading up to bedtime.

Practice for daylight saving time changes early

"Staying awake a whole hour early and then sleeping in can be difficult, especially for children," she said. She recommends that people try going to bed 20 minutes later (or earlier, depending on the time of year) a few days ahead of the change and then add 20 minutes every day until the clocks change for a more gradual transition.

Get regular exercise

This can be a tool to help with sleep all year round, Das said, but it's especially important to pay attention to [physical activity](#) during the beginning or end of daylight saving time. Studies, she said, have shown how exercise helps people with jet lag or adjusting to time changes, whether from Daylight Saving or traveling to different time zones.

Limit caffeine and alcohol consumption, especially in evenings

Both of these disrupt sleep, and while it might be tempting to use these as aids to combat [daylight](#) saving sleepiness, Das said they'll leave you feeling even less rested.

Keep bedtime routines the same

Try to have as few interruptions as possible to one's nighttime rituals (timing, bath or shower, reading, eating habits) as this will help alert

your body that it's [time](#) to fall sleep, Das said. This can be especially helpful for children, too.

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