

# Adult Day Self-Care Newsletter

March 2024

## Sleep is Essential for Health

This year, [World Sleep Day](#) falls on Friday, March 15—between the start of Daylight Savings Time (March 10) and the spring equinox (Tuesday, March 19) in the US. This is not a time to sleep all day, but a day to raise awareness about how important sleep is for overall health. Getting the right amount of good quality sleep has many positive effects. These include supporting memory and learning, immune health, and overall brain health. Poor sleep, disrupted sleep, and too little sleep contribute to health problems and increase health risks. For example, poor sleep has been linked to obesity, diabetes, coronary artery disease, and susceptibility to infections. Cognitive impairment in many forms is linked to inadequate sleep, increasing risks for dementia, seizures, stroke, and death from heart disease. [Family caregivers](#) supporting someone with dementia often experience their own sleep problems. Even short-term sleep disruptions can affect judgement and reaction times, just like alcohol intoxication! Drowsy driving, like drunk driving and distracted driving, causes accidents and fatalities. The [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#) estimates that over 20% of fatal crashes involve a drowsy driver. Many studies highlight the relationship between inadequate sleep and impaired job performance, especially for [healthcare workers](#) who do shift work.

## Why do we have Daylight Savings Time?

Long before Daylight Savings Time (DST) was enacted, the US had [more than 144](#) local time zones! This change in 1883, when the railroads needed a standardized system to coordinate their schedules. They set up four US time zones, which changed to five in 1918 by the US Interstate Commerce Commission. In 1966, the responsibility for managing standardized time was assigned by Congress to the newly formed US Department of Transportation.

That same year (1966), the Uniform Time Act established DST, with its “spring forward and fall back” clock adjustments. States have the option to exempt themselves from DST, and some territories and states (Hawaii and Arizona) have done so.

A test of full-time DST (1974) to save energy was not a success. In 1987, the start date for DST was moved, and the [start/end dates](#) were changed again in 2007. Current dates for DST are the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November.



## Spring Ahead!

What’s your opinion about changing the clocks twice a year? The American Academy of Sleep Medicine thinks it’s a [bad idea](#). By changing to daylight savings time, they say, we experience “a misalignment between clock time and solar time” that creates a “social jet lag.” This can cause health effects, mood shifts, and an increase in fatal traffic accidents. You can read more about this on the AASM [Sleep Education](#) website.

## What's Happening While We Sleep?

While you may not remember much from a night's sleep, your brain is still busy! The activities going on while you're asleep are critical for your health. Over the night, your brain cycles through different [sleep stages](#), when these functions occur:

**Clean up:** Like the rest of your body, your brain takes in energy and sends out waste. Some of this goes out through the blood. Other clean up happens through the "glymphatic system," which researchers think provides a "deep clean" that removes proteins such as those that cause [diseases](#) like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

**Healing:** Human growth hormone is released while you sleep. This is important for children, of course, but also help your body heal from injury and illness, as well as the small damage that occurs to your cardiovascular system throughout the day. Even a small loss of sleep, like setting the clocks ahead this month, is related to a measurable increase in heart attacks across the northern hemisphere.

**Memory:** During sleep, short-term memories are transferred to long-term storage, where they are "filed" in your memory catalog. At this time, the brain also seems to get rid of things you don't need to remember, like where you parked your car yesterday. Sleep helps you learn and retain physical skills as well as information.

If you're not convinced yet that sleep is important to your health, consider that sleep loss is associated with abnormal blood sugar levels, risk of diabetes, and weight gain!

So, on World Sleep Day, and throughout the month, set a goal to make your sleep a priority. [Learn](#) what you can do to improve your sleep, one small step at a time!

Source: Walker, M. (2017). *Why we sleep*. NY: Scribner.

## For More Information

Check out our past newsletters to find tips for improving your sleep and for helping people with memory loss sleep better. Many other topics are also available!

<https://care2caregivers.com/professional-resources/adult-day-staff-training/>

You are welcome to share this newsletter (and any others) with your staff. Either forward the PDF by email, or hand out print copies!

## Care2Caregivers Website

You can find the [Adult Day Resources pages](#) on our website through the drop-down menu in the Professional Resources section.

As always, you can access the Self-Care resources on our website for free. Use our NEW link:

**Self-Care for Professional Caregivers**  
<https://care2caregivers.com/professional-resources/self-care/>

### Upcoming Caregiver Education 2024

#### Rest for Caregivers: Tools for Supporting Good Sleep

March 13, 2024, 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

#### Healthy Ways to Manage Caregiver Stress

April 11, 2024, 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

For more info email Mary Catherine:  
[lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu](mailto:lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu)  
or call Care2Caregivers at 890-424-2494



visit our website [www.care2caregivers.com](http://www.care2caregivers.com) for information on caregiver support groups

**1-800-424-2494**