

MARCH Safety Talk

Topic: The hazards of daylight saving time!

Not surprisingly, studies have shown that losing an hour of sleep when the clocks change to daylight saving time, can have an impact on your ability to stay alert on the job and prevent serious injuries. A 2012 study indicated that heart attacks spike by as much as 55% in the weeks right after Daylight Saving kicks in.



Heart attacks aren't the only danger. A University of British Columbia study found that the Monday morning after the daylight saving time change, there was an 8 percent increased risk of accidents in Canada.

If you have trouble sleeping, those problems can go on for weeks.

Insomnia is no joke, and any change in sleep patterns can be even more problematic for people who have trouble sleeping at the best of times.

10 ways to get a good nights' sleep:

1. **Only sleep and have sex in the bedroom**
This means no reading or watching TV in bed.

Doing these things confuses your body, making it difficult to fall asleep.

2. **Keep a Schedule**
Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
3. **Make a Bedtime Ritual**
Create a nightly ritual to signal your body that it's time to sleep. Start the ritual about 30 minutes before you lie down.
4. **Exercise Daily**
This will improve your chances of falling asleep quickly and sleeping deeply. Try to exercise early in the day and never within three hours of bedtime.
5. **Get enough sunlight**
This helps regulate your circadian clock and makes you feel sleepy at night by stimulating your body to produce melatonin, a hormone that regulates your sleep cycle. Morning sunlight exposure can be especially helpful.
6. **Avoid Caffeine in the afternoon**
If you are having trouble sleeping, try avoiding all afternoon and evening caffeine.
7. **Make your Bedroom dark**
The contrast between light during the day and dark at night helps reinforce your body's natural rhythms.
8. **Avoid alcohol**
That small glass of wine can make it more difficult to stay asleep. After an evening drink, you might fall asleep just fine, but you will likely wake up in the middle of the night, caused by a rebound in blood sugar and withdrawal from the alcohol after it is metabolized. For every drink you have, give your

body at least an hour to process it before trying to fall asleep.

9. **Don't smoke**
The nicotine in cigarettes is a stimulant that will keep you awake, which is just one of the nasty things that smoking does to your body.
10. **See a Doctor**
Finally, if these lifestyle changes don't help, contact your doctor. You may have a sleep disorder or may just need temporary help convincing your body that it is time to sleep.

So, as you head out to work in the morning, take a moment and realize that statistically you may not be at the top of your game right after the switch to daylight saving time. Your awareness of hazards may be down. Take some extra time to evaluate the hazards.

