

Light for Good Health -- Avoid Daylight Saving Time Doldrums

Daylight Saving Time means an extra hour of daylight at the end of the day, but that can affect people's health. People need bright days and dim/dark nights.

DALLAS, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, March 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- That extra hour of sleep gained in the fall is about to be paid back when we spring forward this weekend to begin Daylight Saving Time (DST). Most states in the U.S. (exceptions are Arizona and Hawaii) as well as much of Canada, observe DST, which means adjusting clocks ahead one hour for the next

eight months. All living things depend on light to survive, so while it seems great on the surface to have more daylight at the end of the day, that increased light can affect people's health too, according to the [American Lighting Association](#) (ALA).



photo courtesy of Lutron Electronics

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Terry McGowan, FIES, director of engineering for ALA

Living beings experience 24-hour sleep/wake cycles called circadian rhythms. That simply means people need bright days and dim/dark nights to match what their body expects. Recent research finds that people are at their best when exposed to bright light early in the day and dimmer light in the late afternoon and evening. This “dose” of light should be experienced daily to maintain the circadian rhythms, which can improve sleep and overall health.

“In today’s world, the natural day/night cycle might be difficult to achieve,” says Terry McGowan, FIES, ALA’s director of engineering. “Many people spend their days

inside working and their evenings exposed to bright screens and artificial light sources, interfering with the desired cycle of light exposure. The good news is that research shows that electric light sources can help provide exposure to the right levels of light at the right times

throughout the day to help maintain a healthy circadian rhythm.”

LIGHT YOUR WORKSPACE

When working from home or in an office with windows, utilize available daylight and move your workstation closer to the window. Also, consider adding a bright, but diffused light source about arm’s length away from where you spend the most time during the day. Light from a bright bulb diffused through a shade or other source will be easier on the eyes allowing you to continue to focus on the tasks at hand while maintaining proper light exposure.

CONTROL LIGHT LEVELS

Utilize lighting controls, such as dimmers or smart control products. If lights are on dimmers, set a timer to remind you to turn down the light levels in the late afternoon/evening. With smart controls, it is possible to program lights to automatically adjust according to the time of day.

McGowan particularly recommends putting dimmers on portable task lamps in home offices since these are the lights not only closest to the user, but also the ones used for the different kinds of visual task work that people may encounter during the workday.

LIGHT IN LAYERS

It is always a good practice to light every space in layers. Incorporating general or ambient lighting, accent lighting, and task lighting provides more versatility. In addition to enhancing the style and function of a space, lighting in layers makes it easier to focus lighting when and where you need it, which gives you more control over the light you are exposed to throughout the day.

A lighting professional at a nearby [ALA-member showroom](#) can help design a lighting plan for a beautiful, functional, and healthy space. With hundreds of member showrooms throughout the U.S. and Canada, the ALA tag means you will find the best selection, prices, and expertise. Find more lighting tips at [ALALighting.com](#).

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