

HEALTH

Toronto researchers push to eliminate Daylight Saving Time, switch permanently to Standard Time



BY [KAMIL KARAMALI](#) - GLOBAL NEWS

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York University biology professor [Patricia Lakin-Thomas](#) feels like British Columbia is on the right track by [introducing new legislation](#) that would eliminate changing clocks twice a year.

But where Lakin-Thomas feels the western province falls short is changing it permanently to Daylight Saving Time — when clocks are advanced by one hour from March until early November.

“It’s farther away from our natural body time.”

Lakin-Thomas said her research at York University’s “Clocklab” — which studies the biological clocks in animals — has shown that **Standard Time**, when clocks are reversed one hour from November until March, **is much healthier for humans**.

“The question is, ‘do we permanently want light in the afternoon with Daylight Saving Time or do we want it in the morning with Standard Time?’”

“In the winter, if we go on Daylight Saving Time year-round — we’re going to be getting up in the dark in the winter for several hours, it’s going to be several hours before the sun comes up,” said Lakin-Thomas.

She notes that **our body clocks need the morning light**.

“We must reset it with light in the morning because our body clocks run a little slow and we have to speed them up with morning light,” said Lakin-Thomas. “Afternoon light is actually bad for us because that makes our clocks run a little slow even and we’re going to want to get up later and stay up later and then we get out of step with our environment.”

Lakin-Thomas said that some studies compared the health of Canadians on the east coast versus the west coast because people who live in Western Canada get sunlight later in the morning when compared to Atlantic Canada.

“(The researchers) found that people on the west sides of time zones have higher rates of diabetes and overweight, higher rates of heart disease and very scary statistics on higher rates of cancer.”

B.C. premier John Horgan introduced legislation last week to make Daylight Saving Time (DST) permanent, after a public survey that found 93 per cent of British Columbians who participated are in favour of getting rid of seasonal time changes and sticking to DST.

Now, the province is waiting for Pacific states south of the border to move its feet, with Washington and Oregon in support of permanent DST but waiting for the support of U.S. Congress.

Meanwhile, California has recently shown support for switching from DST to permanent Standard Time.

Lakin-Thomas said that her group and the Canadian Society of Chronobiology have teamed up to educate the public on shifting permanently to Standard Time to be the healthier choice, but adds they don’t have the resources to lobby the Ontario government to scrap Daylight Saving Time.