



Opinion

JUST PLAIN TALK: It's time for no more time changes

By Buz Livingston

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It was only fitting and proper for a pandemic to hit on a week with a full Comanche moon, Friday the 13th, and a change to Daylight Savings Time. I prefer Standard Time, and while that puts me in the minority, it's not the first time I've been outnumbered. **The data overwhelmingly supports Standard Time as superior**, but let's pick one or the other and stick with it.

Like jet lag affects your body, the annual time change works similarly. Humans have a natural circadian rhythm, which affects hormone levels and blood pressure, and changing the clock on the wall disrupts our internal clocks. Chronobiology is the study of physiological rhythms and other cyclical phenomena.

An expert in the field, Till Roenenberg from the University of Munich, recommends abolishing daylight savings time (DST). He argues DST means we live in another time-zone without changing the daylight cycle. Our circadian clock attempts to work at biologically inappropriate times.

Many people have their sleep disrupted when we foolishly change times. "It makes no sense," Beth Ann Malow, a professor at Vanderbilt Medical Center, recently wrote. For people with sleep disorders, the bi-annual switches exacerbate the problem. Don't discount how sleep patterns affect your body.

Multiple studies have found a 5-15% increased risk of a heart attack during the days after shifting to DST. While it's only a single study, a soon to be published article by Muhammad Adeel Rishi found the opposite effect during the fall switch back to Standard time.

Atrial fibrillation is the most common type of irregular heartbeat, a condition that puts you at risk for blood clots and stroke. Dr. Andrew Krumerman, Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine, recently published data (January 2020, Sleep Medicine) showing an **increase in atrial fibrillation admissions during the switch to DST but not after the change back to Standard time.**

Driving on U.S. Highway 98 or 30A during spring break puts your life at risk; the change every spring makes it worse.

Researchers at the University of Colorado found a **significant increase in fatal accidents during the DST change but not during the fall.** A 6% increase in fatalities doesn't seem spectacular, but it is avoidable and is matter of life and death.

Anecdotally speaking, living on the edge of the Eastern/Central time zone makes time change more dramatic. Getting off work in the dark during the winter is depressing, but the sunsets are killer. I handle the groggy, mid-day slump with a brief after lunch nap, five to 15 minutes. The biggest disappointment for me is my nearsightedness blurs five and six on my bedside digital clock. Some mornings I roll over and go back to sleep thinking it is still 5 a.m. instead of 6.

More Americans (41%) prefer Standard time compared with 31% for DST.

Choose one or the other and keep it year-round.

You can't always get what you want, but Buz Livingston, CFP, can help you figure out what you need. For specific advice, visit livingstonfinancial.net or drop by 2050 West County Highway 30A, M1 Suite 230.