

## Jet lag - what is it and how will I know if I have it?

When traveling across time zones, you might experience severe fatigue, irritation, headache, and trouble concentrating. We frequently call this collection of symptoms "jet lag". This is one example of what happens to our body when we disturb the natural rhythm of day and night.

Jet lag symptoms are even worse when you're traveling to the east – our body finds it easier to cope with a longer day than to "lose" several hours while heading east.

### Tips for travelers going west

#### Before you take off

- A couple of days before you leave, start training your body to adapt to time shifts - try going to bed an hour or two later than usual

#### While on board

Do your best NOT to sleep. Here are some tips for staying awake:

- Change position and move a lot
- Drink a lot of water.
- Eat food rich in protein (like cheese, fish, eggs) – this will help you stay awake

#### After you arrive

- Once the plane touches down, don't give in to tiredness; wait until the evening and then go to sleep
- Take full advantage of daylight – it will help you fight sleepiness
- Plan important meetings for the morning hours – this is when you will be at your best

### Tips for travelers going east

#### Before you take off

- You can help manage jet lag by getting your body ready for the time shift a few days before you leave
- Try going to sleep and getting out of bed earlier than usual

#### While on board

- Try to sleep. Foods rich in carbohydrates (fruit juice, potatoes, pasta, yogurt) will help you doze off
- Avoid sleeping pills and alcohol. Instead, use natural methods for helping you get to sleep, like herbal tea

#### After you arrive

- Plan important meetings for the evening hours – this is when you will be at your best

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### General advice



- Avoid alcohol, because it makes it harder for your body to adapt
- Drink a lot of water during the flight
- Remember to set your watch to the time at your destination. Do this right after you get on the plane. This will help you mentally switch to the new day rhythm
- Do your best to adjust to your destination's schedule of meals, sleep hours, etc.
- For the first few days after you arrive, avoid heavy physical effort and mental strain
- Spend as much time as possible outdoors
- If you take medicines at strictly defined hours, consult your physician before the journey

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