

Turn the Clock Ahead, But Watch Your Heart

Could daylight savings time be bad for your heart?

By Elena Rover



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Turning the clock forward for daylight saving time is a nuisance and a sleep thief -- and now it seems it's also bad for your heart.

Analyzing 20 years of data, scientists in Sweden found that the number of heart attacks typically rises 6 to 10 percent for the three days after clocks jump forward; the day after the clocks are set back each fall, heart attacks fall by 5 percent. A lack of sleep may be to blame for the danger, says study coauthor Imre Janszky, MD, of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm -- other studies have shown that chronic sleep deprivation is hard on the heart. This year, hit the sack early after resetting your clock. But you may not have to fret about your bedtime forever. The Swedish statistics suggest that people over 65 are less apt to be harmed by the time change -- perhaps because retired folks are less tied to the clock.