

JET LAG: WHAT ARE THE REMEDIES? CAN THEY BE PREVENTED?



WHAT IS JET LAG?

Jet lag, also known as circadian rhythm sleep disorder and rapid time zone change, is a physiological imbalance that occurs when traveling across different time zones because our internal clock (which controls the periods of sleep and wakefulness) is slow to adjust to the new schedule.

BEFORE YOUR FLIGHT

1 Start adjusting your biological clock. This will help you adjust to the new time as fast as possible.



2 Westward flights. If possible, go to bed one to two hours later for a couple of days before your trip. Combine this with exposure to bright light at dusk.



3 Eastward flights. If possible, go to bed one or two hours earlier for a few days before your trip.



4 Try to get plenty of sleep.



Don't leave packing and other preparations to the last minute. If possible, select a flight with a departure time that does not shorten your night's sleep before traveling.

DURING THE FLIGHT



5 Be as comfortable as possible. Travel in business or first class if you can afford it.

6 Beber con prudencia. Drink a lot of water to stay hydrated and compensate for the dry atmosphere on board. Don't drink alcohol if you intend to take a sleeping pill during the flight.



7 Take a pill to help you sleep if necessary. For example, a short-action hypnotic will induce sleep during the flight. However, don't take any hypnotics if there is a risk of deep vein thrombosis, and don't combine them with alcohol.



8 Take measures to avoid deep vein thrombosis. Sitting immobile for too long can increase the risk of thrombosis.

Change position frequently and walk around as often as you can. If you are prone to blood clots, check with your physician as you may need a special preventive measure (e.g. use of anti-embolism stockings.).



ON ARRIVAL

9 Adjust to the local time as fast as possible. When you reach your destination, change your routine to the local time immediately.



This will enable your biological clock to adjust to the new environment more quickly.

10 If you have lost sleep due to a night flight, take a nap when you arrive at your destination.

Take naps during the day but make them as short as possible (20-30 mins)



11 Take hypnotics if necessary. If the other strategies don't work, consider the possibility of taking a short-action hypnotic when you go to bed to improve the quality and length of your sleep.



12 Limit your caffeine intake. Caffeine can make you more alert during the day but should be avoided from noon onwards as it can jeopardize your nighttime sleep.



13 Scheduled exposure to sunlight. This helps to readjust the circadian rhythms.



Westward flights
Expose yourself to sunlight two or three hours before dusk and avoid it during the first two or three hours after dawn.



Eastward flights
Expose yourself to sunlight in the morning and avoid it two or three hours before dusk.