

— FREE QUICK-START • TRAVEL

The Circadian *Time-Zone* Scheduler

Light rules by direction, a converter that puts each dose time on the destination clock, and a three-day plan for the days after you land.



2

DIRECTIONS

4

DOSES CONVERTED

3

DAY PLAN

1

DAYS-TO-ADJUST
ESTIMATE

TRAVEL • FREE SCHEDULER

The Circadian *Time-Zone* Scheduler

Light rules for flying east and west, an estimate of how many days your body clock needs, a converter that puts each dose time on the destination clock, and a three-day plan for the days after you land.

2 DIRECTIONS east and west light rules	1 ESTIMATE days your clock needs	4 DOSES on the destination clock	3 DAYS of arrival plan
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How to use this scheduler

BEFORE YOU FLY

STEP 1 Name your direction and zones East or west, and how many zones. That decides the light rules and the days to plan for.	STEP 2 Time your light East: morning light at the destination. West: evening light. The table gives the exceptions.	STEP 3 Eat and sleep on local time From the first meal. Naps short (20 to 30 minutes) and early.	STEP 4 Convert the doses Put each dose time on the destination clock, then check the plan with your pharmacist.
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Light Moves the Clock

3 FACTS

Jet lag is a mismatch between your body clock and the local clock. The body clock only moves through timed signals, above all light. Get the timing of light right and the clock moves your way; get it wrong and it holds still or moves the wrong way.

East is harder than west. The body clock runs a little longer than 24 hours, so staying up later (flying west) is easier than going to bed earlier (flying east). CDC puts the average at about 1.5 time zones a day westward and 1 a day eastward.

Light timing is the lever. Light in your body's morning moves the clock earlier, which helps eastward. Light in your body's evening moves it later, which helps westward. The same sunshine helps on one route and hurts on the other.

Medicines do not follow the sun. Insulin, blood thinners, seizure medicines and some birth-control pills keep their dosing interval across time zones. The converter shows the same moment on the destination clock, so you and your pharmacist can plan the change.

THE EVIDENCE BEHIND IT

CDC YELLOW BOOK 2026, JET LAG DISORDER The body clock adapts about 1.5 hours a day after westward flights and 1 hour a day after eastward flights.	CDC YELLOW BOOK 2026, MELATONIN 0.5 to 1mg is often enough to shift the clock; more than 5 mg is not recommended.
CDC YELLOW BOOK 2026, SHORT TRIPS For trips under about 2 days, staying on home time for sleep, meals and activity is usually better than adapting.	

SOME MEDICINES NEED A REAL PLAN

Insulin, blood thinners, seizure medicines, transplant and HIV medicines and progestin-only pills have narrow timing margins. For these, ask your prescriber, pharmacist or diabetes team for a written plan for both directions before a trip across 3 or more time zones. Melatonin can interact with blood thinners, seizure medicines and sedatives: ask first.

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Light Rules and Days to Adjust

CALCULATES

TRIP	SEEK	AVOID
Flying east (move the clock earlier)	Bright light in the local morning	Bright light in the evening. After 6 or more zones east, also keep the first hour or two after local dawn dim for the first days
Flying west (move the clock later)	Bright light in the late afternoon and evening	Bright light early in the morning for the first days
Trips under 2 days	Light at your usual home-time hours where you can	Adapting at all; stay on home time

DAYS TO ADJUST (CDC AVERAGES)

TIME ZONES CROSSED

FLYING EAST: 1 ZONE A DAY

FLYING WEST: 1.5 ZONES A DAY

HELPERS

Melatonin

0.5 to 1 mg before destination bedtime, mainly when flying east. More than 5 mg is not recommended.

Caffeine

In destination daytime; stop at least 6 hours before bed.

Naps

20 to 30 minutes, in the early afternoon at most.

Before you go

Shift bedtime about 1 hour a day for 2 to 3 days: earlier for east, later for west.

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The Dose Time Converter

CALCULATES

Look up both UTC offsets for your travel dates (New York is -5 in winter, -4 in summer; Paris is +1 in winter, +2 in summer). Then enter each dose as an hour on your home clock. The converter shows the same moment on the destination clock.

HOME UTC OFFSET

DESTINATION UTC OFFSET

SHIFT (DESTINATION MINUS HOME)

MEDICINE	HOME TIME (HOUR 0-23)	SAME MOMENT, DESTINATION CLOCK

This is the time arithmetic, not a dosing plan. Many medicines can move to the usual local time at once; time-critical ones need the plan from your prescriber or pharmacist. Coming home, swap the two offsets.

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The Three-Day Arrival Plan

EAST AND WEST

DAY	AFTER FLYING EAST	AFTER FLYING WEST
Day 1	Stay up; light from late morning; nap 20 to 30 min at most; bed at local time	Stay up until at least 9 p.m.; light in the late afternoon and evening
Day 2	Morning light from waking if fewer than 6 zones; otherwise from late morning	Sunglasses early in the morning; outdoor light after lunch and in the evening
Day 3	Normal local routine with morning light	Normal local routine; exercise in the afternoon

DAY 1 • MY TIMES

OUTDOOR LIGHT

BED AND WAKE

MEALS

DAY 2 • MY TIMES

OUTDOOR LIGHT

BED AND WAKE

MEALS

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From a Scheduler to a Whole Trip

This scheduler handles the clock. **The Healthy Travel Preparation Toolkit** plans the whole trip: a six-week timeline, every medicine converted and packed, the full jet-lag plan, travelers' diarrhea by severity, the kit and the cards to carry.

Every medicine, planned a supply calculator, timing groups and a day-by-day dose plan with the converter for six medicines.	THIS FREE SCHEDULER ✓ East and west light rules ✓ A days-to-adjust estimate ✓ A converter for four doses ✓ A three-day arrival plan
The full jet-lag plan light by direction and distance, pre-trip shifting, flight rules, arrival days and a log.	THE TOOLKIT ADDS ✓ A six-week preparation timeline that counts itself ✓ Six medicines converted, with a day-by-day dose plan ✓ Food, water and diarrhea plans by severity ✓ The kit, clot check, wallet ID and phrase card
Travelers' diarrhea, by severity what to do at each level, with doses, red flags and rehydration.	
The kit and the cards a travel health kit checklist, clot risk check, wallet health ID and phrase card.	

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SEE THE TRAVEL TOOLKIT →

SOURCES • FACT-CHECKED BY THE HEALTH SECRETS EDITORIAL TEAM	
CDC Yellow Book 2026: Jet Lag Disorder.	Adjustment rates, light timing, melatonin dose, caffeine, naps, pre-trip shifting and short trips.
ISMP: Acute Care Guidelines for Timely Administration of Scheduled Medications.	Which medicines are time-critical.
CDC US Selected Practice Recommendations for Contraceptive Use, 2024.	Late-pill windows for progestin-only pills.

BEFORE YOU FLY

Know your direction. *Time your light.*

01 • SHIFT

East or west, and how many zones.

02 • CONVERT

Each dose on the destination clock.

03 • GO FURTHER

The toolkit plans the whole trip.

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JET LAG

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