

JUNE 2017 JET LAG

School's out for summer and the living is easy. That is unless you happen to be starting an internship or your first real job. Then you may be experiencing the symptoms of jet lag. The transition from student to professional is not an easy one, but if you start working on a healthy sustainable lifestyle now, oh the places you will go!

Much like traveling across five time zones, 7:00AM feels particularly foreign when your usual wake time is noon. Chugging a few cups of coffee to get through the first few hours will make you think faster, but make sure to set yourself up for long-term success. Eat first, drink an additional glass of water for each cup, and quit caffeinating at noon. This will give your liver enough processing time so you won't be wired at bedtime. When the weekend rolls around and your body has adjusted, it will be tempting to revert to your "Thirsty Thursday" ways. Staying in and catching a movie instead can be a great way to ease into a weekend of rest and recreation.

WHAT IS JET LAG?



Jet lag is a disturbance of the sleep-wake cycle caused by traveling through multiple time zones. Symptoms tend to be more severe when traveling from west to east and may include:

- Headache
- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Lethargy
- Changes in appetite

Generally, these diminish over a few days' time. The best way to minimize them is to assimilate to the local time as quickly as possible, to avoid caffeine and alcohol, and to stay hydrated.

The student weekend begins on Thursday evening, but alas the rest of the world begins the weekend on Friday. By Friday you will be psyched for some fun. On Friday evening, do whatever you do and sleep in on Saturday, because Sunday it is back to a modicum of routine. Plan on getting up at 8:00AM or no more than one hour later than your usual workday wake time. Get outside. Get some exercise. Eat a light dinner. Plan on a screen-free hour and a hot bath to help you wind down and fall asleep at a reasonable time.

With a little practice and planning you can develop daily rituals that will set you up for long-term success. These rituals are small repeatable actions that will eventually become so routine that you won't have to give them any thought.



For now, avoiding workweek jet lag by monitoring your sleep and wake time, eating breakfast before coffee and drinking more water may be all that you can handle. When those feel solid, pick no more than three from the accompanying lists. Please don't take on any more than that. Behavioral science tells us that we can only sustain up to three incremental changes at one time. Welcome to your professional life! Like any journey, take it one step at a time.







PATRICIA M.
FULLER, PhD,
Director, Wellness
Engineering

Patricia M. Fuller has dedicated the last 19 years to designing and delivering wellness programs. Her events earn consistently excellent ratings for her holistic approach and her real world application.

Prior to concentrating in wellness, Pat taught accounting and auditing as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa. She earned her CPA designation in 1992 as a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand. She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah.

Pat has a PhD in holistic nutrition. In 2010, she was board certified by the Holistic Nutrition Credentialing Board. Her areas of research include stress management and eating habits. She is a Certified Wellcoach and a member of the Institute of Coaching. She is an annual attendee to The Harvard Medical School Conference, Coaching In Leadership & Healthcare.

pfuller@bks-partners.com | Have a Question? Email it to Dr. Pat!

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