

## Patient Handout

1. Light is a universal time giver (synchronizer) for the central clock in the brain.
2. Food is a time giver (synchronizer) for the peripheral clocks in our organs and tissues.
3. Mistimed light and food cues (presenting either or both in the inactive phase of the clock) send confusing signals to the clocks, causing circadian, (and metabolic), disruption.
4. Eat within the “light-phase” of the clock and preferably within a 10-12 hour eating window.
5. Get plenty of sunlight especially in the early a.m. to fully activate the central clock.
  - a. This will release adequate cortisol for physical and mental alertness.
  - b. Sunlight also phase advances the release of melatonin, so melatonin production occurs sooner, allowing individuals to fall sleep more easily at night.
6. Exercise in the late afternoon primes muscle for activity and can offset disruptive sleep patterns.
7. Dim the lights an hour or so before bedtime and switch off blue light emitting devices; this will also allow a robust melatonin onset.
8. Follow a consistent eating/sleep schedule as the circadian clock is all about anticipatory mechanisms!
9. Following the above tips will mobilize all the right circadian genes, hormones, and enzymes to support homeostasis and a strong circadian rhythm.