

Circadian Rhythm: Your Body Clock Controls More Than Sleep

Feeling tired in the morning, wired at night, foggy in the afternoon—or just off in a way you can't explain?

It's not just sleeping.

Your **circadian rhythm** is your internal body clock—and it regulates way more than when you feel sleepy.

If it's out of sync, so are your hormones, digestion, detox, and energy.

Here's what to know—and how to get back on track.

What is Circadian Rhythm, Anyway?

It's your 24-hour internal clock, controlled by light exposure, hormone release, and daily routines.

This rhythm affects:

- When you feel alert or sleepy
- When cortisol and melatonin rise
- When your gut digests best
- When your body detoxes most effectively
- Even when your cells repair or your immune system activates

In short: this clock runs the show.

What Throws Off Your Body Clock?

Modern life, mostly:

- Blue light from screens at night
- Skipping breakfast and eating late
- Irregular sleep/wake times
- Traveling across time zones
- High stress and nighttime cortisol spikes
- Not seeing sunlight in the morning

Basically, we're all jet-lagged without ever leaving the house.

Why It Matters in Functional Medicine

Your circadian rhythm directly affects:

- **Cortisol balance** (goodbye, wired-but-tired feeling)
- **Thyroid and sex hormones** (they follow daily and monthly rhythms)
- **Gut motility and digestion** (your gut has a clock too!)
- **Melatonin production** (needed for sleep *and* mitochondrial repair)
- **Cellular detox and immune function**

If your body feels off but your labs are “normal,” your rhythm might be the missing piece.

Lifestyle Tips to Reset Your Rhythm

Let's bring your body clock back into alignment—no supplements required:

✓ Get sunlight within 30–60 minutes of waking

Even if it's cloudy. Natural light is the strongest circadian signal.

✓ Wake and sleep at the same time daily

Yes—even weekends. Consistency is what your hormones need.

✓ Avoid bright light/screens 1–2 hours before bed

Use night mode or blue light blockers if needed. Melatonin doesn't like Netflix at 11pm.

✓ Eat meals on a regular schedule

Try to have your biggest meal earlier in the day, and avoid late-night eating.

✓ Move your body during the day

Exercise strengthens your rhythm—but not too late or it can keep you wired.

✓ Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet

Your body needs a drop in temperature to fall asleep naturally.

The Functional Medicine Takeaway:

Your body is wired for rhythm. When your circadian clock is aligned, hormones regulate, inflammation drops, and healing happens more efficiently.