

MIND &amp; BODY

## Why lockdown might be making you feel like you're constantly jetlagged

Honestly feels like we just got off of a 24h flight - and we're expected to work and function normally.

Andrew May

 SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 10:50AM

Feel like you've just changed timezones? You're not alone. Image: iStock Source:BodyAndSoul

**Lockdown got you feeling tired and out of sorts? Your circadian rhythms might be to blame.**

The first lockdown in March last year was almost novel. Working from home, not getting dressed for work each day (hello, leisurewear!).

However, constant change, uncertainty, and ambiguity have killed any novelty, and the longer COVID continues to disrupt our lives, the more people are feeling flat, fatigued and in many cases, like they have a constant case of jetlag.

A participant in one of our 30 Day Boost programs last week commented, *"Most days I feel jetlagged or slightly hungover. But without the Qantas pyjamas and no champagne on the tarmac."*



on surviving lockdown without losing your sl

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The key to understanding why you feel like this is first delving into the science of chronobiology (the body clock) then exploring four areas to re-energise you and your routine.



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## Understanding your body clock

The internal clock, or circadian rhythm, has taken thousands of years to develop; yet our modern lifestyle – with stimulants from electric lighting to caffeine, shift work and alarm clocks – is comparatively new to the human species.

COVID is even 'newer' but many of our adaptive behaviours brought on by WFH, home schooling and social distancing, are playing havoc with our internal rhythms.

Circadian rhythms determine the sleeping and feeding patterns of all humans. Brain wave activity, hormonal secretion, body temperature, metabolism, heart rate, blood pressure, cell regeneration and as other important biological activities are linked to this 24-hour cycle.



Feeling tired? Image: iStock. Source:BodyAndSoul

In a regular 24-hour day there are times when energy and alertness levels are at a peak and times you are most likely to feel tired and low in energy. Most people have two peak alertness times each day, around 12 noon and between 6 and 7pm. Almost everyone's body clock is programmed to make them feel sleepy in the middle of the afternoon (around 3pm).

COVID has changed this. We have lost natural rhythm in our days, weeks, even months. Every day feels the same, without the structure guiding us subconsciously to know what

this pandemic.

These psychological factors, combined with ongoing questions about how our workplaces will function moving forward, can all play a big part in causing fatigue and increasing the risks associated with burnout.

Once you reach that point of exhausting yourself, your health MORE IN MIND BODY is your



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Raise your hand if you're burning the candle at both ends. Image: What To Expect When You're Expecting *Source:BodyAndSoul*

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## Jolting lockdown jetlag

The following five strategies help reset the body clock; create explicit borders that demarcate the start and finish of your working day; add rituals to enhance mental wellbeing; and prioritise activities each week that nurture your soul and connect you to what is important.

### 1. Transition Time

Create rituals at the end of each working day to transition from work to home. This can include activities like an evening walk, ocean swim, bike ride, warm bath, listen to music or call a family member or friend. Create your own activities that help your body and brain disconnect from work and transition to your personal life.



often. Aim to spend 30 minutes each day in nature, ideally in sunlight to get maximum immune-boosting and mental wellbeing benefits. And do as many walking meetings as you can during the day.



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Get some morning sunshine! Image: Unsplash Source:BodyAndSoul

### 3. Go to bed and get up at the same time

Your body doesn't know Wednesday from Saturday, changing up your sleep routine messes with your biological clock. Our circadian rhythm thrives on routine and consistency when it comes to our wake and sleep cycles.

### 4. Physical activity double dip

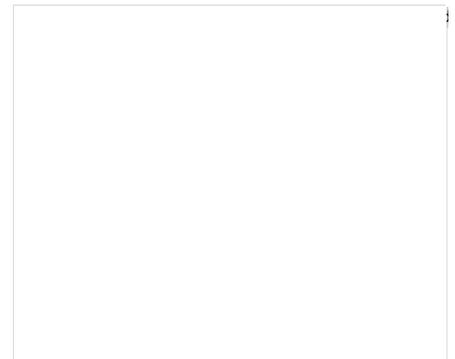
Regularly train/move with others to strengthen relationships. Exercise is a great way to build physiological capacity, get a dose of nature and connect with other people.



A walk a day keeps the doctor away. Image: iStock Source:BodyAndSoul

### 5. Laughter, fun and play

Build joy and play into your schedule, especially in weeks of constant back-to-back video conferences and meetings. Watch a comedy, call a friend, go to the park with children,





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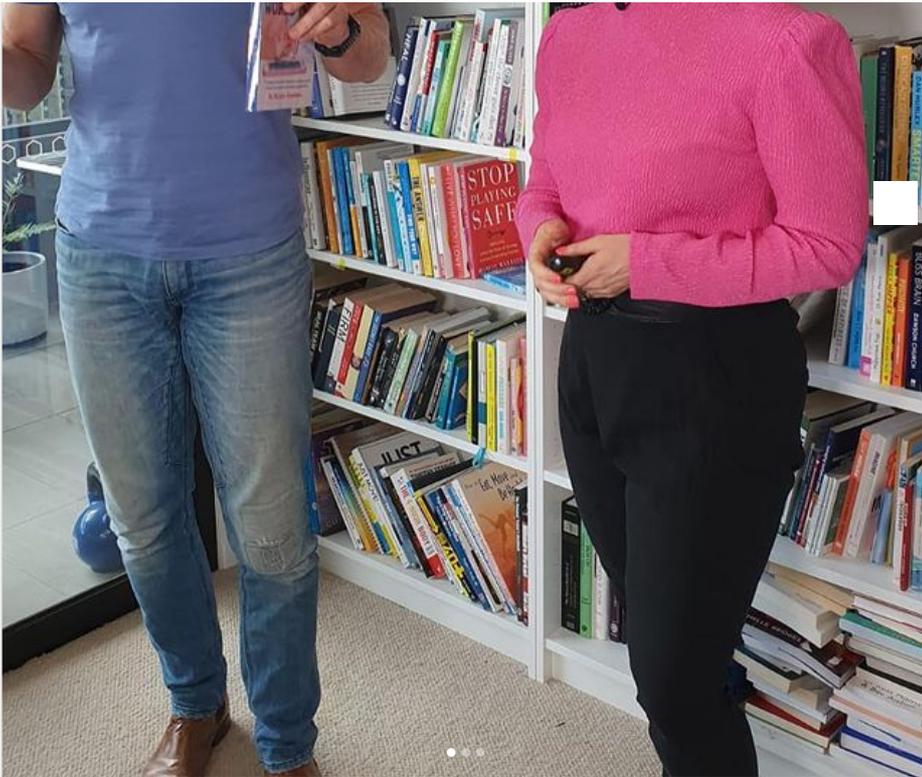
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Really enjoyed presenting this morning with @drkristy as part of the @nab Business Fit program, powered by @strive.stronger

Kristy spoke about:

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Digital Donuts 🍩

Techno Tantrums

Infobesity

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And the scariest statistic - The average knowledge worker now does less than 2hrs and 48 minutes of deep productive work every day. With the rest of the day filled with distractions 😬

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