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Darker Afternoons Ahead: How Henrico Seniors Can Stay Safe, Rested, and Social This November

In Henrico, daylight saving time ends on **Sunday, November 1, 2026**, when clocks move back one hour. Although the change brings an extra hour of sleep, it can also disrupt sleep patterns, medication routines, evening activities, and driving habits.

For older adults, especially those dealing with vision changes, balance concerns, memory loss, or poor sleep, a one-hour shift may take some getting used to. Darker evenings can also raise [**fall risk**](https://alwaysbestcare.com/glen-allen/balance-tracking-system/) at home. With a little preparation and support from trusted [**caregivers**](https://alwaysbestcare.com/glen-allen/caregivers/), families can make the transition smoother and safer.

What you will learn:

- How to help your loved one adjust sleep and medication routines when the clocks change.
- Simple ways to make darker evenings safer at home and on the road.
- How companionship and caring support can help Henrico seniors stay connected, confident, and independent.

Adjust Sleep Gradually

Our bodies rely on light, meals, activity, and regular sleep times to maintain a steady rhythm. Rather than changing everything overnight, begin adjusting bedtime and wake-up time by about 15 to 20 minutes over several days.

Helpful steps include:

- Keep wake-up and bedtime schedules consistent.
- Open the curtains or spend time outdoors after waking.
- Avoid long or late-afternoon naps.
- Limit caffeine late in the day.
- Follow a calming bedtime routine, such as reading or listening to quiet music.
- Keep the bedroom comfortable, quiet, and not too warm.

Morning light can help the body settle into the new schedule, while dimmer light in the evening may make it easier to wind down.

Review Medication Routines

Many seniors take medicine at set times linked to meals, bedtime, or waking up. For many once-daily prescriptions, the one-hour change won't cause a problem. Still, some medicines require precise timing.

Before the clocks change, review:

- Prescription times
- Pill organizers
- Medication lists
- Refill dates
- Phone or alarm reminders

Never change the timing of an important medication without asking a doctor or pharmacist first. This is especially important for medicines used for diabetes, Parkinson's disease, seizures, or other conditions where timing matters.

Improve Lighting Before Darkness Arrives

After the time change, Henrico evenings became darker earlier. That reduced light can make hallways, stairs, bathrooms, and entryways harder to navigate.

Walk through the home in the late afternoon and evening. Look for dim areas and add:

- Brighter bulbs
- Motion-sensor lights
- Nightlights in hallways and bathrooms
- Easy-to-reach lamps
- Clear lighting near entrances and outdoor steps

Keep a flashlight near the bed, too. Removing loose rugs, cords, clutter, and other tripping hazards can further reduce the chance of a fall.

Reconsider Evening Driving

Earlier sunsets can make familiar roads feel more challenging. Glare from headlights, reduced contrast, wet pavement, and difficulty spotting pedestrians may affect an older driver's comfort and confidence.

If possible, schedule appointments and errands during daylight. Family members, friends, community transportation, or **Always Best Care of Henrico** can help with rides when evening driving becomes stressful.

The goal isn't to take away independence. It's to match driving plans with comfort, visibility, and safety. No one should drive while drowsy.

Check for Fall Hazards

Leaves, wet sidewalks, uneven pavement, and poorly lit steps can create problems outside the home. Indoors, rushing to answer the door or reach the bathroom in low light can also increase risk.

Encourage seniors to:

- Wear supportive, non-slip shoes.
- Use handrails on stairs.
- Keep pathways clear.
- Turn on lights before walking through a room.
- Avoid hurrying, especially at night.
- Ask for help with outdoor steps or slippery walkways.

Fear of falling deserves attention. If someone begins avoiding activities after dark, gentle support and a safer home setup can help preserve confidence and daily movement.

Protect Mood and Social Connection

Shorter days may lead some older adults to spend more time indoors and see fewer friends. Watch for changes in sleep, appetite, mood, or interest in favorite activities.

Daytime walks, family visits, phone calls, hobbies, and community outings can add structure and connection. A predictable daily routine often makes seasonal changes feel less disruptive.

How Always Best Care of Henrico Can Help

At **Always Best Care of Henrico**, we understand that seasonal changes can affect everyday routines. Our [**in-home services**](https://alwaysbestcare.com/glen-allen/in-home-care/) and [**companionship
services**](https://alwaysbestcare.com/glen-allen/resources/the-importance-of-companionship-in-h

ome-care-services-in-henrico-va/) include transportation support, medication reminders, light household help, and assistance with daily activities.

Our caregivers also help seniors stay engaged, move safely around the home, and keep familiar habits as darkness arrives earlier.

The end of daylight saving time is a small change on the clock, but it can affect sleep, safety, driving, and mood. Planning ahead gives seniors more time to adjust and keep enjoying independence at home.

To learn how [Always Best Care of Henrico](https://alwaysbestcare.com/glen-allen/contact/) can help your loved one, call **(804) 676-6530** to schedule a care consultation.

FAQ

When does daylight saving time end in Henrico in 2026?

Daylight saving time ends on Sunday, November 1, 2026. At 2:00 a.m., clocks move back to 1:00 a.m.

Should seniors change medication times?

Not without professional guidance. Ask the prescribing doctor or pharmacist whether a medication should follow the old schedule or the new clock time.

How can seniors sleep better after the time changes?

Keep a steady routine, get morning light, avoid late naps, limit evening caffeine, and adjust bedtime gradually before the clocks change.

What should families do about earlier darkness?

Improve lighting in hallways, bathrooms, bedrooms, stairs, entrances, and outdoor walkways. Remove clutter and loose rugs that may be difficult to see.