



## SUPPORTING SLEEP

Good sleep is essential for growth, development and wellbeing. As Neurologic Music Therapists, we can support sleep through the use of a very carefully chosen metronome cadence. We would love to have a conversation with you about rhythmic supports for your loved one at night, but please be aware that finding the right metronome speed and settings can be a long and complex process.

In the meantime, we can support you with the following information and non-musical steps you can take to give sleep the best possible chance in the meantime.

### BLUE WAVE LIGHT

Our bodies operate on a timing system called circadian rhythm, which gives internal signals for when to wake up and go to sleep. The main cue for our bodies' circadian rhythm is the type of light we intake through our eyes. **Blue wave light** keeps us alert. **Contrasting light waves** at sunrise and sunset set the time for when to wake up and fall asleep.

There are a number of simple steps you can take to make sure your light intake is maximising your chance for good sleep:

- Most devices now have options to remove blue wave light from the screen after sunset. Turn this setting on by following these instructions:
  - *Nightshift* on **Apple** devices [link](#)
  - *Night light* on **Android** devices [link](#)
  - *Night light* on **Windows** computers [link](#)
- If possible, aim to spend 5 minutes every morning and evening outside at **sunrise** and **sunset**. If that isn't possible, prioritise sunrise over sunset.
- Avoid all blue wave light in the home after sunset. This online shop sells **lightbulbs** which can change between daytime, twilight and night-time modes. They can be fitted into any light socket easily, making them a viable option for renters as well as homeowners. [link](#)

## TEMPERATURE

Temperature and thermoregulation is key in sleep. To fall asleep, our brains need to decrease in temperature by approximately 1° Celsius. This happens through a process of blood moving from the head and core to the hands and feet.

Here are some simple steps you can take to support sleep in regard to temperature:

- Make sure the **bedroom is cool enough**. In summer, this can be a challenge, but a space which is too warm will be a big barrier to both falling asleep, and the quality of the sleep.
- **Avoid too much clothing around the chest** and torso. If extra warmth is needed, consider adding socks and gloves first.
- Experiment with the temperature of a shower right before bed. A **cool shower** could be a good way of lowering the body temperature in summer, and a warm shower can be a good way of bringing heat to the extremities in winter. Changing between a warm and cool shower can also be useful for activating an under-responsive thermoregulation system, but please do this with care.

## CAFFEINE

While many of the people we work with don't consume tea or coffee, its still worth being aware of how caffeine can hinder *and* help sleep:

- **Avoid chocolate**, tea and coffee after lunchtime.
- Adults can actually improve sleep by **consuming caffeine** between two hours from waking, and ten hours from bedtime.

## References

*Most information in this resource is taken from research cited in a 6-part podcast series from Huberman Lab [link](#)*