Neurocalcin acts in a clock- and light-modulated dopaminergic

pathway to promote night sleep in *Drosophila*

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Short title: *Drosophila* Neurocalcin promotes night sleep

Abstract

Members of the neuronal calcium sensor (NCS) family act as key regulators of

calcium signaling in neurons by modulating target proteins such as voltage- and

ligand-gated ion channels in response to changes in intracellular calcium. In

Drosophila, the NCS protein Neurocalcin has been shown to be broadly expressed

within the nervous system, suggesting important neurobiological roles. However,

whether Neurocalcin impacts complex behaviors in *Drosophila* has remained unclear.

Here, using a hypothesis-based guilt-by-association strategy, we identify a novel role

for Neurocalcin in promoting night sleep but not day sleep. We show that Neurocalcin

acts in a common pathway with the D1-type Dop1R1 dopamine receptor, and that

both the circadian clock and light-sensing pathways demarcate the temporal window

during which NCA promotes sleep. Furthermore, we find that Neurocalcin functions

in a multi-component wake-promoting neural network and demonstrate that the

mushroom bodies, a known sleep-regulatory center, are a module within this circuit.

Our results define a critical role for Neurocalcin in *Drosophila* and further our

understanding of how distinct sleep periods are genetically regulated.

Author summary

Sleep in *Drosophila* occurs during both the day and night, yet the genetic pathways

that selectively impact day versus night sleep are poorly understood. Here we uncover

a link between the neuronal calcium sensor Neurocalcin and sleep in *Drosophila*. We

show that Neurocalcin acts in a pathway involving the Dop1R1 dopamine receptor to

promote sleep during the night, but not the day, and that the night-specific effect of

NCA is coordinated by the circadian clock and light-sensing pathways. Furthermore,

we identify a complex wake-promoting neuronal network in which NCA functions to

regulate sleep, and our results suggest that NCA suppresses output from this circuit.

Thus, we identify a novel role for Neurocalcin in *Drosophila* and shed light on the

genetic regulation of distinct sleep stages.

Introduction

Introduction

Sleep is a widely conserved and critical behavior that impacts numerous aspects of

nervous system function, including neuronal development [1], clearance of metabolic

waste [2], synaptic plasticity [3-6], and the generation of complex behaviors such as

courtship and aggression [1, 7]. The fruit fly, *Drosophila melanogaster*, exhibits a

sleep-like state characterized by periods of immobility, altered posture and elevated

arousal thresholds [8, 9]. Similarly to mammals, sleep in *Drosophila* is regulated by

circadian and homeostatic processes [10, 11]. Furthermore, just as human sleep can be

separated into distinct temporal stages of differing arousal thresholds (REM and non-

REM sleep), sleep in *Drosophila* also varies in intensity throughout the day/night

cycle, with night sleep associated with higher arousal thresholds relative to day sleep

[12].

Due to the vast genetic toolkit of *Drosophila*, many research groups have

utilized this organism to identify sleep-relevant genes [11, 13-18], several of which

have been shown to play a conserved role in regulating mammalian sleep [19, 20]. Of

note, mutations in a select number of genes modulate either day or night sleep in

Drosophila, suggesting an underlying genetic basis for the distinct characteristics of

these separate sleep stages [21, 22]. Nonetheless, it is still unclear how day versus

night sleep is designated to allow a given gene to specifically regulate one sleep phase

or the other, and whether day and night sleep are defined by the circadian clock, the

presence or absence of light, or both.

The identification of new genes selectively impacting day versus night sleep in

Drosophila will help provide answers to such questions. Previously, unbiased large-

scale screens of EMS-mutagenized [14, 17], P-element insertion [15], or transgenic

RNAi knockdown lines [18] have been used to identify *Drosophila* sleep mutants. As

well as advancing our understanding of the genetic basis of sleep, such studies have

yielded an additional benefit. Since distinct genes that similarly impact a given

phenotype may act in a shared genetic network, identification of mutations that

modulate sleep generates testable hypotheses regarding gene function. For example,

the finding that Sleepless, a Ly6/neurotoxin-like protein, promotes expression of the

Shaker potassium channel arose from the fact that both *sleepless* and *shaker* mutants

exhibit sleep loss and ether-induced leg shaking [14, 15, 23], suggesting that these

two proteins act in a common molecular pathway.

However, such genome-wide approaches are highly laborious, requiring

screening of thousands of fly lines to identify a limited number of sleep mutants [15,

17]. Thus, targeted screening strategies of higher efficiency may represent a useful

complement to unbiased high-throughput, yet low yield, methodologies. Here we

uncover a novel sleep-relevant gene in *Drosophila* using an approach based on

genetic and neurobiological correlates between *Drosophila* sleep and a human

movement disorder, primary dystonia. From an initial screen of just five candidate

loci, we identify the neuronal calcium sensor Neurocalcin (NCA) as a sleep regulatory

factor that specifically promotes night sleep in *Drosophila*. Our results reveal a novel

role for NCA and demonstrate the utility of targeted mini-screens to study sleep in

Drosophila.

Results

Identification of Neurocalcin as a sleep-promoting factor

We identified NCA as a novel sleep regulator using a guilt-by-association strategy

based on phenotypes linked to mutations in *KCTD17*/*insomniac*, homologous genes

encoding a Cullin-3 adaptor protein in humans and *Drosophila* respectively [17, 24].

In humans, a *KCTD17* mutation causes myoclonus dystonia, a disorder characterised

by repetitive movements, contorted postures and non-epileptic myoclonic jerks in the

upper body [24]. In *Drosophila*, null or hypomorphic mutations in the *KCTD17*

homologue *insomniac* (*inc*) result in profound reductions in sleep [16, 17]. A potential

link between these two phenotypes is dopamine signalling. Altered plasticity of

dopaminergic circuits within the striatum, a motor control centre, has been proposed

as a potential mechanism underlying dystonic movements [25]. In *Drosophila*,

dopamine is a pro-arousal factor. Elevated dopaminergic neurotransmission strongly

reduces sleep [26-28], and INC has been suggested to control sleep by negatively

regulating dopamine signalling [16].

Since genes often act in conserved modules [29], we posited the existence of a

partially conserved genetic network that, in humans, is linked to dystonia, and which

in *Drosophila* may influence sleep, both through dopamine signalling. To test this, we

used transgenic RNAi driven by the pan-neuronal driver *elav*-Gal4 to knockdown

expression of *Drosophila* homologs of the dystonia-genes *TOR1A*, *GNAL*, *ANO3*,

THAP1 and *HPCA* [24, 30-34] (*dTorsin*, *GαS*, cg6938, cg10403 and *nca* respectively)

in neurons, and subsequently measured sleep in knockdown flies and respective

controls. Here, sleep is defined as 5 min of inactivity as measured by the *Drosophila*

Activity Monitoring (DAM) system, a common standard in the field [35]. From this

targeted small-scale screen, we found that expression of a transgenic RNAi line

(*kk108825*, termed *kk*, Fig 1A) targeting *nca* mRNA reduced night sleep, but not day

sleep, in adult male flies housed under 12 h light: 12 h dark conditions (12L: 12D) at

25°C (Fig 1A-C). Night-specific sleep loss due to neuronal *nca* knockdown was also

observed in virgin adult female flies (S1A, B Fig), and in male flies expressing the *kk*

nca RNAi using other pan-neuronal (*nsyb*-Gal4) or broadly expressed (*insomniac*-

Gal4) drivers (S1C Fig).

Sleep architecture in *Drosophila* is generally studied in 12L: 12D conditions.

Interestingly, we found that reduced night sleep in *nca* knockdown males appeared

enhanced under short photoperiod conditions (8L: 16D) (Fig 1D). Similarly to 12L:

12D conditions, in 8L: 16D day sleep was unaffected whilst night sleep was robustly

reduced (Fig 1E, F). Night sleep loss under short photoperiod was also observed in

flies expressing two other independent RNAi lines targeting *nca* mRNA (*hmj21533*

and *jf03398,* termed *hmj* and *jf* respectively) (S2A-D Fig). The *kk* and *jf* dsRNAs

target a partially overlapping sequence of *nca*, whereas *hmj* targets a distinct upstream

sequence (S2A Fig). For each RNAi line, we confirmed reduced *nca* expression using

qPCR (S2E Fig). Transcription of *nca* occurs from promoter regions shared with the

downstream locus *cg7646* (S2A Fig), yet *cg7646* transcription was not affected by

nca RNAi (S2F Fig), nor were any common off-target mRNAs predicted for the *kk*,

hmj or *jf* dsRNA hairpins (data not shown). Since pan-neuronal expression of three

independent RNAi lines targeting two separate regions of *nca* mRNA reduce night

sleep, we conclude that NCA acts in the *Drosophila* nervous system to promote night

sleep. For simplicity, we use the *kk nca* RNAi for all subsequent experiments, and

refer to flies expressing *kk nca* RNAi under *elav*-Gal4 as *nca*^{KD} (*nca* knockdown). All

experiments below are performed under 8L: 16D conditions unless otherwise stated.

Neurocalcin promotes long sleep bouts in the early night

To analyse the impact of NCA on night sleep in more detail, we utilised a custom-made sleep analysis package (see Methods) to measure the initiation and length of individual sleep bouts in nca^{KD} and controls. We visualised individual sleep bouts across each population, plotting the time of onset and offset for night sleep bouts from n = 48 flies per genotype. Using this method, control flies containing either *nca kk* RNAi transgene or *elav*-Gal4 driver alone were observed to frequently initiate long sleep bouts in the early night (Fig 1G, H). In contrast, nca^{KD} flies did not exhibit equivalent longer sleep bouts (Fig 1I). Thus, NCA acts in neurons to promote consolidated sleep, particularly during the early phase of the night.

NCA does not impact circadian rhythmicity or waking activity

NCA could potentially impact sleep indirectly via an effect on the circadian clock and/or locomotor activity. Firstly, we therefore tested whether NCA was under clock control or regulated circadian rhythms. *nca* mRNA expression did not cycle throughout the day/night cycle in whole head tissue (S3A Fig). Importantly, nca^{KD} flies did not exhibit any change in circadian patterns of locomotor activity under constant dark conditions (S3B-C Fig). Furthermore, waking locomotor activity (defined as the number of DAM beam breaks per waking minute) was not significantly altered in nca^{KD} flies (Fig 1K). These results suggest that *nca* knockdown does not indirectly impact sleep/wake behavior by altering locomotor activity or impacting the circadian clock**.**

Light-sensing and circadian pathways modulate the effect of NCA on sleep

The night-specificity of sleep loss in nca^{KD} flies prompted us to test whether circadian

and/or light-sensing pathways restrict the effect of *nca* knockdown on sleep to the

night phase. Initially, we examined sleep patterns in nca^{KD} flies under constant dark

conditions, during which the circadian clock acts to distinguish subjective day from

night. Interestingly, robust sleep loss in nca^{KD} flies was restricted to the subjective

night (Fig 2A, B).

As a complementary approach, we next analysed sleep in nca^{KD} flies under

two conditions in which the circadian clock is no longer functional. Firstly, in

constant dark (DD) conditions and in an arrhythmic background due homozygosity

for a *timeless* knockout allele [36]. In DD, and without a functional clock to

demarcate subjective day from night, sleep loss was now observed throughout the 24

h dark period (Fig 2C, D). Secondly, we examined the effect of *nca* knockdown under

constant light conditions, in which the circadian clock becomes rapidly arrhythmic

due to light-dependent degradation of Timeless [37-39]. Strikingly, in constant light,

sleep loss in nca^{KD} flies was completely suppressed (Fig 2E, F). From the above data,

we conclude that the circadian clock is not required for NCA to promote sleep per se,

but instead defines when NCA is sleep promoting, with light acting as an

environmental signal that suppresses the impact of NCA on sleep.

We sought to determine which light-sensing pathways restrict the sleep-

promoting role of NCA to the night. We reasoned that removing relevant

photoreceptive molecules, cells or transduction pathways might restore sleep loss in

nca^{KD} flies during constant light conditions. Ablation of photoreceptor cells through

expression of the pro-apoptotic gene *hid* (*gmr > hid*) did not restore sleep loss to

nca^{KD} flies during constant light conditions (Fig 2G, H). In contrast, using a loss of

function allele of *cry* (*cry*^{02}), we found that loss of CRY in constant light resulted in a

small but significant loss of sleep in nca^{KD} flies (Fig 2I, J). CRY acts as a blue-light

photoreceptor and has dual roles in synchronization of the circadian clock by light and

light-dependent regulation of clock cell excitability [39, 40], suggesting that one or

both of these pathways acts to modulate the timing of sleep loss in nca^{KD} flies.

However, the reduction in sleep in nca^{KD}, cry^{02} flies in constant light is lower in

magnitude compared to nca^{KD} flies in DD or 8L: 16D conditions (Fig 1B and 2A),

suggesting that additional light-sensing pathways act in concert with CRY to inhibit

the effect of reduced NCA levels on sleep/arousal. The restoration of clock function in

cry^{02} homozygotes in constant light conditions may also contribute to the observed

sleep loss in nca^{KD}, cry^{02} flies under constant light [39].

NCA acts in a common pathway with the Dop1R1 dopamine receptor

NCA is highly homologous to the human neuronal calcium sensor Hippocalcin (S4

Fig), and mutations in Hippocalcin cause DYT2 primary isolated dystonia [33]. One

neuronal signalling mechanism frequently linked to dystonia is dopaminergic

neurotransmission, with altered dopaminergic signalling within the striatum proposed

to underlie forms of primary dystonia [41]. We therefore tested whether NCA

modulates sleep via a dopaminergic mechanism. Under 8L: 16D conditions *nca*

knockdown in dopaminergic neurons did not result in night sleep loss (Fig 3A and S1

Table). However, heterozygosity for a null or strongly hypomorphic allele of the

Dop1R1 dopamine receptor (*Dop1R1*$^{MI03085-G}$, a homozygous lethal MiMIC insertion)

rescued night sleep loss in nca^{KD} flies (Fig 3B, C). Importantly, in both *elav*-Gal4/+

and *kk*/+ control backgrounds, heterozygosity for *Dop1R1*$^{MI03085-G}$ did not alter sleep

levels (Fig 3B, C; $p > 0.05$, Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test). A similar

epistatic interaction between *nca* and *Dop1R1* was observed using a second, weaker

Dop1R1 allele (*Dop1R1*^{MI004437}) (S5 Fig). From the above results, we propose that

NCA acts in a common pathway with Dop1R1 to regulate night sleep, potentially

downstream of dopaminergic neurons.

NCA acts in two distinct circuits to promote night sleep

We next sought to delineate the neural circuits in which NCA functions to promote

night sleep. Using cell-specific *nca* knockdown, we performed an extensive screen of

sleep relevant circuits defined by numerous *promoter*-Gal4 driver lines (Fig 3A and

S1 Table). These include clock, neurotransmitter-specific, fan-shaped body,

mushroom body (MB), and sensory neurons (Fig 3A) [11, 36, 42-46]. Furthermore,

given the genetic interaction between *nca* and *Dop1R1*, we utilised genomic enhancer

elements in the *Dop1R1* locus to drive *nca* knockdown in subsets of potential

Dop1R1-expressing neurons (Fig 3A and S1 Table) [47, 48]. However, in contrast to

broadly expressed drivers (*elav*-, *nsyb*- and *inc*-Gal4), *nca* knockdown in restricted

neural subsets was insufficient to significantly reduce night sleep (Fig 3A and S1

Table).

These results suggested a complex sleep-relevant circuit requirement for NCA.

Thus, we sought to reduce NCA levels in multiple sub-circuits to test for a

simultaneous role of NCA in distinct anatomical regions. Through this approach, we

found that *nca* knockdown using two *enhancer*-Gal4 lines (*R21G01* – an enhancer in

the *TrpA1* locus, and *R72C01* – an enhancer in the *Dop1R1* locus), was sufficient to

strongly phenocopy the effect of pan-neuronal *nca* knockdown on night sleep (Fig

4A-C; compare Fig 4B with Fig 1B). For simplicity we refer to these drivers as *G01*

and *C01* respectively.

Each *enhancer*-Gal4 line drives transgenic fluorophore expression in 150-200

neurons in the adult male *Drosophila* brain (Fig 4A), and label neuropil regions that

only partially overlap between the two drivers. The *G01* enhancer drives expression in

a subset of MB neurons, a cluster of cell bodies adjacent to the anterior ventrolateral

protocerebrum (AVP), and two visual sub-circuits: optic lobe (OL) and anterior optic

tubercle (AoT) neurons. *C01* drives expression in the MBs, neurons projecting to the

MB γ-lobes, and the antennal mechanosensory and motor center (AMMC) (Fig 4A).

G01 and *C01* also label dispersed cell bodies of unknown identity. The potential

overlap of *G01* and *C01* in the MBs raised the possibility that sleep loss in *G01/C01*

> *nca* RNAi flies was due to strong NCA knockdown in neurons common to both the

G01 and *C01* enhancers. If so, driving *nca* RNAi with two copies of either *G01* or

C01 should mimic sleep loss in *G01/C01* > *nca* RNAi flies. However, this was not the

case (S6 Fig). Thus, NCA is simultaneously required in non-overlapping sub-circuits

labelled by the *G01* and *C01* enhancers.

Given that *C01* is a *Dop1R1* enhancer element, that *nca* and *Dop1R1*

genetically interact to regulate sleep (Fig 3B), and that Dop1R1 is highly expressed in

the MBs [49], we tested whether the MBs were a constituent of the *C01* expression

domain by swapping *C01* for the MB-specific driver *ok107* and measuring sleep in

flies expressing *nca* RNAi in both *G01* and MB neurons. Indeed, knockdown of *nca*

in both *G01*- and MB-neurons also specifically reduced night sleep (Fig 4D), albeit to

a weaker degree compared to knockdown in *G01*- and *C01*-neurons (compare Fig 4C

and 4D). Thus, we conclude that the MBs are an important component of a complex

network defined by *C01*-Gal4 with additional, as yet undefined, neurons acting within

both the *C01* and *G01* domains to regulate night sleep.

G01-neurons enhance *C01*-mediated arousal

To confirm a sleep-relevant role for *C01*- and *G01*-neurons we tested whether

activation of either subpopulation was sufficient to alter sleep. To do so, we expressed

the temperature-sensitive channel TrpA1 in either neuronal subset or both, and shifted

flies from a non-activating temperature (22°C) to an activating temperature (27°C)

sufficient to cause hyperactive neurotransmission through TrpA1-mediated cation

influx [50] (Fig 5A). At the non-activating temperature, over-expression of TrpA1 in

either circuit or both did not alter sleep levels (Fig 5B). At the activating temperature,

excitation of *G01*-neurons did not alter night sleep levels relative to controls (Fig 5C).

In contrast, excitation of *C01*-neurons profoundly reduced night sleep (Fig 5C, D) as

well as day sleep (Fig 5C). Interestingly, simultaneous activation of *C01*- and *G01*-

neurons further reduced night sleep relative to activation of *C01*-neurons alone,

despite the lack of effect of *G01*-neuron activation on sleep (Fig 5C, D). These results

suggest that the *C01*- and *G01*-circuits interact to regulate sleep, with *C01*-neurons

acting as a predominant pro-arousal circuit and *G01*-neurons acting in a modulatory

manner to enhance the impact of *C01*-activation on night sleep. We infer from the

above data that NCA suppresses excitability and/or neurotransmitter release in *C01*-

and *G01*-neurons in a clock- and light-dependent manner. These modulatory inputs

are likely to be bypassed by ectopic TrpA1 activation, resulting in sleep loss during

both day and night, in contrast to the night-specific effect of *nca* knockdown.

Discussion

Drosophila Neurocalcin (NCA) is a member of the neuronal calcium sensor family of cytosolic proteins [51]. Previous work has shown that NCA is a calcium-binding protein and that NCA is widely expressed throughout synaptic neuropil regions of the adult fly brain [52]. Despite this, the neurobiological roles of NCA have remained unclear. Using a hypothesis-driven approach based on genetic and neurobiological correlates between *Drosophila* sleep and a human movement disorder, we have uncovered a novel role for NCA as a night sleep-promoting factor.

Our results show that both internal and external cues are integrated by the *Drosophila* nervous system to regulate when NCA impacts sleep. Internal cues are generated by the circadian clock with light acting in parallel as an external signal (Fig 2). Together, these demarcate the temporal window within which NCA promotes sleep. Interestingly, this mode of coordinate regulation by the clock and light contrasts with *Drosophila* NMDA receptor 1 (*Nmdar1*) knockdown flies [22]. Reduced Nmdar1 similarly results in night-specific sleep loss under light-dark cycles, but sleep loss is extended to both subjective day and night during constant-dark conditions, indicating that the effect of Nmdar1 on sleep is gated solely by light [22]. Why *Drosophila* utilizes distinct mechanisms to time the effect-windows of specific sleep-promoting factors is an intriguing question for future investigations.

Similarly to many sleep-promoting factors in *Drosophila* [13, 17, 18, 22, 53, 54], sleep-relevant NCA activity does not map onto a single cell-type within the *Drosophila* nervous system. Rather, NCA acts in multiple neuropil regions, each contributing to a net promotion of night sleep (Figs 3 and 4). One such region is the MB, a well-defined memory and sleep-regulatory center [43, 44, 46, 55]. However, further work is required to identify the full spectrum of key cell-types within the *G01-*

and *C01*-Gal4 expression domains. Acute activation of *G01*- and/or *C01*-neurons

demonstrates that *C01*-neurons are wake-promoting, while *G01*-neurons enhance

wakefulness only in the context of *C01*-neuron activation (Fig 5). Based on our data,

we therefore hypothesize that reduction of NCA in both neuronal subsets causes mild

hyperexcitation, which in *C01*-neurons alone is insufficient to modulate sleep but in

both populations simultaneously causes an increase in network excitability sufficient

to reduce night sleep. In this model, dopamine signalling through Dop1R1 gives

excitatory drive to wake-promoting *C01*-neurons (defined by a *Dop1R1* enhancer

element), and thus reducing Dop1R1 expression negates the increased firing and/or

synaptic release caused by *nca* knockdown (Fig 3). Alternatively, Dop1R1 may act

downstream of wake-promoting *C01*-neurons. Interestingly, neither *C01*- or *G01*-

population includes the fan-shaped body (FSB), a region previously shown to

facilitate dopamine-sensitive arousal via Dop1R1 [27, 28].

How might NCA regulate neuronal activity? The mammalian NCA homolog

Hippocalcin undertakes pleiotropic roles in mammalian neurons, including facilitating

NMDA receptor endocytosis during LTD and gating the slow afterhyperpolarisation,

a potassium current mediated by KCNQ channels [56-59]. Furthermore, recent data

suggest that Hippocalcin negatively regulates calcium influx through N-type voltage-

gated calcium channels [60]. Given the strong homology between Hippocalcin and

NCA, it is possible that NCA plays similar roles in *Drosophila* neurons. However,

further research is required to identify the key molecular pathways through which

NCA impacts sleep.

Finally, our work adds to a growing body of evidence linking *Drosophila*

homologues of primary dystonia genes to dopaminergic signalling. *Torsin* is the

Drosophila homologue of the dystonia-gene *TOR1A* and has been shown to play a

role in dopamine metabolism by regulating expression of GTP cyclohydrolase, a

component of the dopamine synthesis pathway that is also mutated in L-Dopa-

responsive dystonia [30, 61-63]. *Drosophila insomniac* is homologous to the

myoclonus dystonia-gene *KCTD17* (as well the paralogs *KCTD2* and *KCTD5*) [17,

24, 64], and sleep loss in *insomniac* mutants can be rescued by inhibition of dopamine

synthesis [16]. Correspondingly, our work suggests that NCA acts downstream of

dopaminergic neurons in a pathway involving the Dop1R1 dopamine receptor. Given

the link between Torsin, Insomniac and NCA with dopamine signalling, it will be

intriguing to test whether dystonia-gene homologues modulate other dopamine-related

behaviours in *Drosophila*, including sleep, learning, forgetting and courtship [26, 65-

69].

Materials and Methods

Fly husbandry

Fly strains and crossings are maintained on standard fly food at constant temperature $25^{o}C$ under 12 h:12 h light-dark cycles (12L: 12D). The following strains were obtained from Bloomington and/or VDRC stock centers: kk108825 (v100625), hmj21533 (54814), jf03398 (29461), $Dop1R1^{MI03085-GFSTF.2}$ (59802), $Dop1R1^{MI04437}$ (43773), *ple*-Gal4 (8848), *Chat*-Gal4 (6798), *vGlut*-Gal4 (26160), *GAD*-Gal4 (51630), *Ddc*-Gal4(7010), *GMR*-Gal4 (1104), *Trh.1*-Gal4 (38388), *Tdc2*-Gal4(9313), *C5*-Gal4 (30839) and *ok107*-Gal4 (854). The remaining lines obtained from Bloomington stock center are Janelia Flylight collection with identifiable prefixes: R23E10-Gal4, R55B01-Gal4, R52H12-Gal4, *Hdc*-Gal4 (R17F12-Gal4), R21G01-Gal4, R72B05-Gal4, R72B07-Gal4, R72B08-Gal4, R72B11-Gal4, R72C01-Gal4, and R72C02-Gal4. The following lines were gifts from laboratories of Kyunghee Koh: *elav*-Gal4, *nsyb*-Gal4, *tim*-Gal4 and *TUG*-Gal4, Joerg Albert: *nompC*-Gal4 [70] and Nicolas Stavropoulos: *inc*-Gal4:2 [17]. *ppk*-Gal4, TrpA1-CD-Gal4 was described previously [71]. *GMR-hid*, tim^{KO} and cry^{02} were previously described in [36]. Except for *Ddc*-Gal4, *Trh.1*-Gal4, *Tdc2*-Gal4, *nompC*-Gal4 and *Hdc*-Gal4, all *Drosophila* strains used for sleep-wake assay were either outcrossed five times into a standard isogenic background (iso31) or insertion-free chromosomes were exchanged with the iso31 line (*hmj21533, jf03398, Dop1R1^{MI03085-G}* and $Dop1R1^{MI04437}$).

RNA extraction and Quantitative PCR

10-20 fly heads per genotype were collected with liquid nitrogen and dry ice at indicated time points (S3 Fig). Total RNA was extracted using TRIzol™ reagent following manufacturer's manual (Thermo Fisher Scientific). cDNA were reversed

transcribed from 250 or 500 ng of DNase I (M0303S, NEB) treated RNA sample via

MMLV RT (M170A, Promega). A set of five or six standards across 3125 fold

dilution were prepared from the equally pooled cDNA of all genotypes in each

experiment. Triplicated PCR reactions were prepared in 96-well or 384-well plates for

standards and the cDNA sample of each genotype (20 to 40 fold dilution) by mixing

in Power SYBR Green Master Mix (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and the following

primer sets: ncaqF2: acagagttcacagacgctgag, ncaqR2: ttgctagcgtcaccatatggg;

cg7646F: gcctttcgaatgtacgatgtcg, cg7646R: cctagcatgtcataaattgcctgaac or

rp49F:cgatatgctaagctgtcgcaca, rp49R: cgcttgttcgatccgtaacc. The PCR reactions were

then performed in Applied Biosystems StepOne (96-wells module) or QuantStudio

6Flex instruments (384 wells module) using the standard thermocycle. Melting curve

analysis was also performed to evaluate the quality of the PCR product and avoiding

contamination. The Ct values were exported as csv files and a standard curve between

Ct values and logarithm of dilution were calculated using liner regression function in

Graphpad. The relative expression level for *nca*, *cg7646* and *rp49* of each sample

were estimated by interpolation and anti-logarithm. The expression levels for *nca* and

cg7646 of each genotype were further normalized to their respective average *rp49*

level. The statistical difference between the normalized expression levels of each

genotype were determined by Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test using

Graphpad software.

Sleep-wake behavioral analysis

Three to five days old male or virgin female flies of given genotypes were collected

and loaded into glass tubes containing 4% sucrose and 2% agar (w/v). The sleep-wake

behaviors were recorded by Drosophila Activity Monitor (DAM) system for 3 days in

the designated LD regime (L12:D12. L8:D16, DD or LL). The behavior recordings

from the third day of the given LD regime were then analyzed. All flies were

entrained to 12L: 12D prior to entering designed LD regimes, except for one cry^{02}

experiment that flies were entrained to 8L: 16D condition (one of the three

independent experiments shown in Fig 2I and J). *Drosophila* activity (or wake) is

measured by infra-red beam crosses and sleep is defined by 5 minutes with no activity

(no beam crosses). Customized Excel calculators (supplementary file 1) and R scripts

(https://github.com/PatrickKratsch/DAM_analysR) were developed to calculate the

following parameters for individual flies: *Onset and offset of each sleep bout*, *sleep*

bout length, *day and night sleep minutes*, *daily total sleep minutes,* and *daily sleep*

profile (30 minutes interval). An established MATLAB® based tool, Flytoolbox, was

used for circadian rhythmicity analysis [72, 73]. Briefly, the strength of rhythmicity

(RI) was estimated using the height of the third peak coefficient in the auto-

correlogram calculated for the activity time series of each fly. Rhythmic Statistics

values were then obtained from the ratio of the RI value to the 95% confidence

interval for the correlogram ($2/\sqrt{N}$, where N is the number of observations, which

correlatively increase with the sampling frequency), in order to determine statistical

significance of any identified period (RS is ≥ 1)

Immunohistochemistry and confocal microscopy

Adult male fly of R72C01 > CD8::*GFP* and R21G01 > CD4::*tdTomato* were

anesthetized in 70% ethanol before brains were dissected in PBT (0.1M phosphate

buffer with 0.3% TritonX100) and collected in 4% paraformaldehyde/PBT on ice.

The fixation was then performed at room temperature for 15 mins before washing 3

times with PBT. The brain samples were blocked by 5% goat serum/PBT for 1 h at

room temperature before incubation with mouse anti-nc82 (1:200) plus rabbit anti-

GFP (1:1000) or rabbit anti-dsRED (1:2000) in 5% goat serum/PBT at 4°C over 48 h.

The samples were washed 6 times with PBT before incubated with Alexa Fluor 647

goat anti-mouse IgG (1:500) plus Alexa Fluor 488 goat anti-rabbit IgG (1:2000) or

Alexa Fluor 555 goat anti-rabbit IgG (1:2000) in 5% goat serum/PBT at 4°C over 24

h. After washing 6 times with PBT, the samples were mounted in SlowFade Gold

antifade reagent (S36936, Thermo Fisher Scientific) on microscope slides and stored

at 4°C until imaged by inverted confocal microscope Zeiss LSM 710.

Bioinformatics

Conservation of amino acid residues between *Drosophila* Neurocalcin and human

Hippocalcin was determined using ClustalW2 software for multiple sequence

alignment. Amino-acid identity and similarity was visualised using BOXSHADE.

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Figure Legends

Fig. 1 Neurocalcin knockdown results in a loss of consolidated sleep during the

early night in *Drosophila*. (A) Mean sleep levels in 12L: 12D conditions for nca^{KD}

adult males and associated controls (*elav*-Gal4 driver or RNAi transgene

heterozygotes). **(B-C)** Median day **(B)** and night **(C)** sleep levels in the above

genotypes. **(D)** Mean sleep levels in 8L: 16D conditions for nca^{KD} adult males and

associated controls. **(E-F)** Median day and night sleep levels in the above genotypes

during 8L: 16D conditions. Data are presented as Tukey box plots. The 25th, Median,

75th percentiles are shown. Whiskers represent 1.5 x the interquartile range. Identical

representations are used in all subsequent box plots. **A-C**: n = 48 for each genotype;

D-F: 55 > n > 54. **(G-I)** Individual sleep bout durations were measured using a

custom-made R program and visualised by plotting sleep bout onset against offset for

sleep bouts in control and nca^{KD} adult males under 8L: 16D conditions. In control

flies (*elav* > + and + > *kk*), longer sleep bouts initiated early during the night are

highlighted in red **(G, H)**, which are largely absent in nca^{KD} adult males **(I)**. n = 48

for each genotype. **(J)** Distribution of sleep bout lengths in nca^{KD} and control adult

males. Note the significant shift towards shorter sleep bout lengths in nca^{KD} flies

(nca^{KD} vs. driver: χ^2, *df*: 142.0, 4, p < 0.0001; nca^{KD} vs. RNAi: χ^2, *df*: 2112.0, 4, p <

0.0001). **(K)** Number of DAM beam breaks per waking minute for nca^{KD} and control

adult males during night phase of 8L: 16D cycles. 55 > n > 54. ***p < 0.0005, ns - p

> 0.05 as compared to driver and RNAi alone controls via Kruskal-Wallis test with

Dunn's post-hoc test.

Fig. 2 The circadian clock and light-sensing pathways regulate sleep promotion

by NCA. (A-B) Mean sleep levels in nca^{KD} and control adult males across 24 h in

constant-dark (DD) conditions **(A),** and total median sleep levels in the above

genotypes **(B)**. 47 > n > 44. Note the reduced sleep in the subjective night in nca^{KD}

relative to control adult males, but not the day. **(C-D)** Mean sleep levels in nca^{KD} and

control adult males across 24 h in constant-dark (DD) conditions in a *timeless*

knockout (tim^{KO}) background **(C),** and total median sleep levels **(D)**. 39 > n > 32. **(E-**

F) Mean sleep levels in nca^{KD} and control adult males across 24 h in constant-light

(LL) conditions **(E),** and total median sleep levels in the above genotypes **(F)**. 47 > n

> 44. **(G-H)** Mean sleep levels in nca^{KD} and control adult males across 24 h in

constant-light (LL) conditions in a *gmr > hid* background **(G),** and total median sleep

levels in the above genotypes **(H)**. *elav > kk, gmr-hid*/+: n = 51; *+ > kk, gmr-hid*/+: n

= 48; *elav > +, gmr-hid*/+: n = 24. **(I-J)** Mean sleep levels in nca^{KD} and control adult

males across 24 h in constant-light (LL) conditions in a *cryptochrome* null (cry^{02})

background **(I),** and total median sleep levels in the above genotypes **(J)**. 72 > n > 61.

Note the small but consistent reduction in sleep in nca^{KD}, cry^{02} males **(I)**, leading to a

significant decrease in total median sleep levels relative to controls **(J)**. ***p <

0.0005, ns - p > 0.05, as compared to driver and RNAi alone controls via Kruskal-

Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test.

Fig. 3 NCA and Dop1R1 genetically interact to regulate sleep. (A) Transgenic

RNAi-based mini-screen to identify key NCA-expressing neurons. NCA knockdown

with broadly expressed drivers results in reduced night sleep in adult males under 8L:

16D conditions. In contrast, NCA knockdown in previously defined sleep-regulatory

centers, clock neurons, the visual system or subsets of Dop1R1-expressing neurons

did not impact night sleep. FSB: fan-shaped body. MB: mushroom body. Grey and

blue box plots: control lines. Red box plots: experimental lines showing reduced night

sleep relative to both controls. Green box plots: experimental lines failing to show

reduced night sleep relative to one or both controls. See S1 Table for n-values and

statistical comparisons. **(B-C)** heterozygosity for the null or strongly hypomorphic

Dop1R1 allele $Dop1R1^{MI03085\text{-}G}$ (*D1R1/+*) suppressed sleep loss in nca^{KD} adult males,

but did not alter sleep in control males. Mean sleep patterns in 8L: 16D conditions are

shown in **(B)**. Median night sleep levels are shown in **(C)**. **p < 0.005, ***p <

0.0005, as compared to driver and RNAi alone controls via Kruskal-Wallis test with

Dunn's post-hoc test. *elav>kk, D1R1/+*: n = 32; *elav > +, D1R1/+*: n = 15; *+ > kk,*

D1R1/+: n = 32; *elav > kk*: n = 48*; elav > +*: n = 47; *+ > kk*: n = 48.

Fig. 4 NCA acts in a distributed neural network to regulate night sleep. (A)

Confocal z-stacks of adult male brains expressing genetically-encoded fluorophores

under the *G01* or *C01*-Gal4 drivers. Neuropil regions are labelled with anti-Bruchpilot

(BRP, nc82). Scale bar = 100 μm. Arrows point to neuropil centers. AoT: anterior

optic tubercle. MBs: mushroom body neurons. OL: optic lobe. AMMC: antennal

mechanosensory and motor center. **(B-C)** *nca* knockdown in both *G01* and *C01*-

neurons recapitulates the effect of pan-neuronal *nca* knockdown, whereas *nca*

knockdown in either neuronal subpopulation alone does not reduce sleep relative to

controls. Mean sleep patterns in 8L: 16D conditions are shown in **(B)**. Median night

sleep levels are shown in **(C)**. *+ > kk*: n = 80; *C01 > +*: n = 64, *C01 > kk*: n = 80; *G01*

> +: n = 31; *G01 > kk*: n = 31; *C01/G01 > +*: n = 42; *C01/G01 > kk*: n = 71. **(D-E)**

nca knockdown in both *G01* and MB-neurons (defined by *ok107*-Gal4; *ok107*) also

results in reduced night sleep (also see Fig. 3A showing *ok107 > kk* does not cause

sleep loss). Mean sleep patterns in 8L: 16D conditions are shown in **(D)**. Median night

sleep levels are shown in **(E)**. $+ > kk$: n = 31; $G01/ok107 > +$: n = 33; $G01/ok107 > kk$:

n = 42. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.005, ***p < 0.0005, ns – p > 0.05, as compared to driver

and RNAi alone controls via Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test.

Fig. 5 *C01*-neurons are wake-promoting and are modulated by *G01*-neurons. (A)

Experimental paradigm for acute activation of *G01* or *C01*-neurons. 22°C: non-

activating temperature for TrpA1. 27°C: activating temperature. Sleep measurements

were measured over two days in 8L: 16D conditions. **(B-C)** Mean sleep levels across

8L: 16D following expression of TrpA1 in *G01*-, *C01*- or *G01*- and *C01*-neurons (and

associated controls) at 22°C **(B)** or 27°C **(C)**. **(D)** Median change in night sleep levels

(Δ night sleep) following the shift from 22°C on day 1 to 27°C on day 2. $+ > TrpA1$: n

= 53; $G01 > +$: n = 23; $G01 > TrpA1$: n = 68; $C01 > +$: n = 24; $C01 > TrpA1$: n = 40;

C01/G01 > +: n = 33; *C01/G01 > TrpA1*: n = 40. ***p < 0.0005, ns – p > 0.05, as

compared to *TrpA1* or driver alone controls by Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's post-

hoc test (for *C01, G01* or *C01/G01 > TrpA1* compared to controls) or Mann-Whitney

test (for *C01/G01 > TrpA1* compared to *C01 > TrpA1*).

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Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

A

Day 1   Day 2   27°C

22°C

B

22°C

Sleep / 30 min

— + > *TrpA1*
— *G01 > +*
— *G01 > TrpA1*
— *C01 > +*
— *C01 > TrpA1*
— *C01/G01 > +*
— *C01/G01 > TrpA1*

C

27°C

Sleep / 30 min

— + > *TrpA1*
— *G01 > +*
— *G01 > TrpA1*
— *C01 > +*
— *C01 > TrpA1*
— *C01/G01 > +*
— *C01/G01 > TrpA1*

D

27°C - 22°C

Δ night sleep (min)

-400

-800

ns   ***

***   ***

+ > *TrpA1*   *G01 > +*   *G01 > TrpA1*   *C01> +*   *C01 > TrpA1*   *C01/G01 > +*   *C01/G01 > TrpA1*