

1 **Enhancing endogenous adenosine A<sub>2A</sub> receptor signaling induces slow-wave sleep**  
2 **without affecting body temperature and cardiovascular function**

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31

32 **Abstract**

33 Insomnia is one of the most common sleep problems with an estimated prevalence of  
34 10% to 15% in the general population. Although adenosine  $A_{2A}$  receptor ( $A_{2A}R$ )  
35 agonists strongly induce sleep, their cardiovascular effects preclude their use in treating  
36 sleep disorders. Enhancing endogenous  $A_{2A}R$  signaling, however, may be an alternative  
37 strategy for treating insomnia, because adenosine levels in the brain accumulate during  
38 wakefulness. In the present study, we found that 3,4-difluoro-2-((2-fluoro-4-  
39 iodophenyl)amino)benzoic acid, denoted  $A_{2A}R$  positive allosteric modulator (PAM)-1,  
40 enhanced adenosine signaling at the  $A_{2A}R$  and induced slow wave sleep (SWS) without  
41 affecting body temperature in wild-type male mice after intraperitoneal administration,  
42 whereas the SWS-inducing effect of this benzoic acid derivative was abolished in  $A_{2A}R$   
43 KO mice. In contrast to the  $A_{2A}R$  agonist CGS 21680, the  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 did not affect  
44 blood pressure or heart rate. These findings indicate that enhancing  $A_{2A}R$  signaling  
45 promotes SWS without cardiovascular effects. Therefore, small molecules that  
46 allosterically modulate  $A_{2A}R$ s could help people with insomnia to fall asleep.

47

48 **Keywords**

49 Adenosine  $A_{2A}$  receptor, allosteric modulator, insomnia, slow-wave-sleep, body  
50 temperature, cardiovascular function

51

52 **Abbreviations**

53 CHO, Chinese hamster ovary; EEG, electroencephalography; EMG,  
54 electromyography; ECG, electrocardiography; PAM, positive allosteric modulator;  
55 REM, rapid eye movement; SWS, slow-wave sleep.

## 56 **1. Introduction**

57 Insomnia is one of the most common sleep problems with an estimated prevalence of  
58 10% to 15% in the general population and 30% to 60% in the older population (Roth,  
59 2007). Moreover, insomnia frequently co-occurs with a wide range of psychiatric  
60 disorders, including depression and anorexia (de Zambotti et al., 2017; Seow et al.,  
61 2018). The most widely prescribed agents for the treatment of insomnia are  
62 benzodiazepines and non-benzodiazepines, which are central nervous system  
63 depressants that enhance signaling of the inhibitory neurotransmitter  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric  
64 acid (Wafford and Ebert, 2008). These medications, however, are plagued by a wide  
65 range of adverse effects, including muscle relaxation, rebound insomnia, changes in  
66 appetite, next-day sedation, cognitive impairment, amnesic effects, and development of  
67 drug tolerance and dependence (Aragona, 2000; Vgontzas et al., 1995). Orexin receptor  
68 antagonists were also recently developed and approved for treating insomnia (Cox et  
69 al., 2010). The major issues of these drugs are next-morning sleepiness with possible  
70 muscle weakness, strange dreams, sleep-walking, and other nighttime behaviors or  
71 suicidal ideation (Jacobson et al., 2014). Moreover, because orexin receptor antagonists  
72 mostly work by preventing arousal from sleep, they are generally ineffectual in people  
73 who have problems falling asleep. A highly selective adenosine  $A_{2A}$  receptor ( $A_{2A}R$ )  
74 agonist, CGS 21680, produces profound increases in sleep after infusion into the  
75 subarachnoid space underlying the ventral surface region of the rostral basal forebrain  
76 in rats, the lateral ventricle of mice, or the lateral preoptic area of rats (Satoh et al.,  
77 1999; Scammell et al., 2001; Urade et al., 2003; Methippara et al., 2005).  
78 Administration of an  $A_{2A}R$  agonist is not considered to have clinical potential for the  
79 treatment of sleep disorders, however, due to its adverse cardiovascular effects, which  
80 include hypotension and tachycardia (de Lera Ruiz et al., 2014). A positive allosteric

81 modulator (PAM) may evoke selective physiologic A<sub>2A</sub>R responses because, in contrast  
82 to an A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist, its actions are limited to when and where adenosine is released.  
83 Adenosine levels in the brain progressively increase during wakefulness (Porkka-  
84 Heiskanen et al., 1997), and therefore allosteric modulation of A<sub>2A</sub>R to promote the  
85 somnogenic effects of the increased adenosine may be an alternative strategy for  
86 treating insomnia.

87 In the present study, we identified a small lipophilic monocarboxylate (3,4-difluoro-2-  
88 ((2-fluoro-4-iodophenyl)amino)benzoic acid), denoted A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, that induces  
89 slow-wave sleep (SWS), the major part of sleep characterized by slow and high-voltage  
90 brain waves, by enhancing A<sub>2A</sub>R signaling without affecting body temperature, blood  
91 pressure, or heart function in mice.

92

## 93 **2. Material and methods**

### 94 *2.1. Reagents*

95 Adenosine (Nacalai Tesque, Kyoto, Japan), CGS 21680 (Sigma-Aldrich, St. Louis,  
96 MO), Cremophor® EL (Sigma-Aldrich), DMSO (Nacalai Tesque), DMEM (Nacalai  
97 Tesque), FBS (Nichirei Biosciences, Tokyo, Japan), HBSS (Gibco, Waltham, MA),  
98 hygromycin B (Wako, Tokyo, Japan), ketamine hydrochloride (Ketalar, Daiichi  
99 Sankyo, Tokyo, Japan), nonessential amino acids (NEAA; Nacalai Tesque),  
100 penicillin/streptomycin (Wako), pentobarbital (Somnopentyl, Kyoritsu Seiyaku, Tokyo,  
101 Japan), puromycin (InvivoGen, San Diego, CA), saline (Otsuka, Tokyo, Japan),  
102 Ultrance cAMP-kit (PerkinElmer, Waltham, MA), xylazine hydrochloride (Celactal,  
103 Bayer, Tokyo, Japan), ZM241385 (Tocris Bioscience, Bristol, UK), 3-isobutyl-1-  
104 methylxanthine (IBMX; Tocris Bioscience) and HEPES (Gibco).

105

106 2.2. *Animals*

107 Male mouse lines on a C57BL/6 background, including wild-type and A<sub>2A</sub>R KO (Chen  
108 et al., 1999) mice, which were maintained at the International Institute of Integrative  
109 Sleep Medicine and weighing 21-27 g (10-15 weeks old), were used in the experiments.  
110 The animals were housed in an insulated and soundproof recording chamber that was  
111 maintained at an ambient temperature of 23 ± 0.5°C with a relative humidity of 50 ±  
112 5% and an automatically controlled 12 h light/12 h dark cycle (light on at 8:00,  
113 illumination intensity ≈ 100 lux). All animals had free access to food and water. This  
114 study was performed in strict accordance with the recommendations in the Guide for  
115 the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals of the US National Institutes of Health (2011).  
116 Experimental protocols were in compliance with relevant Japanese and institutional  
117 laws and guidelines and approved by the University of Tsukuba animal ethics  
118 committee (protocol #14-322). Every effort was made to minimize the number of  
119 animals used as well as any pain and discomfort experienced by the animals.

120

121 2.3. *Mouse A<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing Chinese hamster ovary cells*

122 The flag epitope-tagged open reading frame of A<sub>2A</sub>R was amplified by PCR from  
123 mouse brain total RNA. The resultant amplicon was cloned into a pMXs-IRES-Puro  
124 retroviral vector (Kitamura et al., 2003). The plasmid was then transfected into the  
125 retrovirus packaging cell line Plat-E (Morita et al., 2000). The supernatant of  
126 transfected Plat-E cells was recovered after 24 h and applied to Chinese hamster ovary  
127 (CHO) cells strongly expressing the ecotropic receptor for the retrovirus (Montminy et  
128 al., 1990). Mouse A<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing CHO (mA<sub>2A</sub>R-CHO) cells were selected in DMEM  
129 supplemented with 5% FBS and 1% NEAA by treatment with hygromycin B (250  
130 µg·ml<sup>-1</sup>) and puromycin (10 µg·ml<sup>-1</sup>). The mA<sub>2A</sub>R-CHO cells were subsequently

131 maintained in DMEM supplemented with 5% FBS, 1% NEAA, 1%  
132 penicillin/streptomycin, and 250  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$  hygromycin B at 37°C in an atmosphere of  
133 5% CO<sub>2</sub>.

134

#### 135 *2.4. cAMP assay*

136 Activation of A<sub>2A</sub>Rs was quantified by cyclic adenosine monophosphate (cAMP)  
137 accumulation in CHO cells expressing mouse A<sub>2A</sub>Rs. CHO cells were suspended in  
138 HBSS containing 1 M HEPES and 0.25 M IBMX in 384-well micro-plates ( $2\times 10^3$   
139 cells/well), and incubated with adenosine and A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 at the indicated  
140 concentrations for 30 min at 25°C. The detection mixture containing the Eu-cAMP  
141 tracer and ULight-anti-cAMP antibody was added and incubated for 1 h at 25°C. A  
142 micro-plate reader (ARVO X5, Perkin Elmer; excitation: 340 nm; emission: 665 nm)  
143 was used to measure the Förster resonance energy transfer (FRET) signal. All  
144 experiments were performed according to the manufacturer's instructions (LANCE  
145 Ultra cAMP Kit, PerkinElmer). The cAMP levels are based on the dynamic range  
146 ("linear portion") of the cAMP standard curve and normalized to the baseline or  
147 adenosine treated group.

148

#### 149 *2.5. Stereotaxic surgery for the placement of EEG/EMG electrodes*

150 Mice were anesthetized with pentobarbital [50 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, intraperitoneal (i.p.)] and then  
151 placed in a stereotaxic apparatus. Electroencephalogram (EEG) and electromyogram  
152 (EMG) electrodes for polysomnographic recordings were chronically implanted in the  
153 mice (Oishi et al., 2016). The implant comprised two stainless steel screws (1 mm in  
154 diameter) inserted through the skull above the cortex (anteroposterior, +1.0 mm; left-  
155 right, -1.5 mm from bregma or lambda) according to the atlas of Paxinos and Franklin

156 (Paxinos and Franklin, 2004) that served as the EEG electrodes. Two insulated,  
157 stainless steel Teflon-coated wires were placed bilaterally into both trapezius muscles  
158 and served as the EMG electrodes. All electrodes were attached to a micro connector  
159 and fixed to the skull with dental cement.

160

#### 161 *2.6. Pharmacologic treatment and infusion cannula implantation*

162 For control data, mice were injected with saline or vehicle ( $10 \text{ ml}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$  body weight,  
163 i.p.) at 22:00 or 21:30, respectively.  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 was dissolved in saline immediately  
164 before use and administered intraperitoneally at 22:00 on the experimental day at a dose  
165 of 30, 60, or  $75 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ . ZM241385 ( $15 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.) was dissolved in vehicle (5%  
166 DMSO, 5% Cremophor® EL in saline) and injected into C57BL/6J mice at 21:30. Mice  
167 were randomly assigned to groups that received control or drug injections.

168 For intracerebroventricular (i.c.v.) infusion of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1, a stainless-steel cannula  
169 was inserted into mice during surgery 0.5 mm anterior and 1.6 mm lateral to bregma to  
170 a depth of 1.6 mm below the dura at an angle of  $20^\circ$ , thus placing the cannula into the  
171 lateral ventricle. To ensure correct placement of cannula, a plastic tube filled with saline  
172 was attached to the infusion cannula; a drop in the meniscus indicated that the cannula  
173 tip was in the ventricle. During the experiments, the mice were infused continuously  
174 using an infusion pump with artificial cerebrospinal fluid into the lateral ventricle of  
175 the brain at a speed of  $1 \mu\text{l}\cdot\text{h}^{-1}$ . Sleep-wakefulness states were monitored for a period  
176 of 36 h after infusion of each compound. Saline infusion recordings were obtained in  
177 each animal for 36 h, beginning at 20:00, which served as the control for the same  
178 animal. In the next experiment,  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 ( $200 \text{ nmol}\cdot\text{h}^{-1}$ ) was infused into the lateral  
179 ventricle of the mouse brain for 12 h (20:00 to 8:00).

180

181 *2.7. Vigilance state assessment based on EEG/EMG polygraphic recordings*

182 Ten days after surgery, the mice were individually housed in transparent barrels in an  
183 insulated soundproof recording chamber and connected to the EEG-EMG recording  
184 cables for 3 to 5 days of habituation before starting the polygraphic recordings. To  
185 evaluate the spontaneous sleep-wake cycle, each animal was recorded for 24 h  
186 beginning at 20:00, the onset of the dark period. The animals then entered the  
187 pharmacologic phase of the study in which sleep-wakefulness parameters were  
188 recorded for 36 h. The data collected during the first 24 h also served as baseline  
189 comparison data for the second experimental day. Cortical EEG/EMG recordings were  
190 amplified, filtered (EEG 0.5-30 Hz; EMG 20-200 Hz), and digitized at a sampling rate  
191 of 128 Hz, and then recording using data acquisition software SleepSign® (Kissei  
192 Comtec, Matsumoto, Japan). The vigilance states were classified offline in 10-s epochs  
193 into three stages, i.e., wakefulness, rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, and SWS by  
194 SleepSign® (ver 3.4) according to standard criteria (Oishi et al., 2016). As a final step,  
195 defined vigilance stages were examined visually, and corrected when necessary.

196

197 *2.8. Blood pressure and heart rate measurement*

198 The blood pressure of the mice was measured using the tail-cuff method with a BP-  
199 98A blood pressure device (Softron, Tokyo, Japan). The same time period (13:00 –  
200 16:00) was selected for testing the blood pressure of each mouse (9-12 weeks old) to  
201 avoid normal daily variations in blood pressure. Five consecutive days were used to  
202 habituate the mice to the device. To optimize cardiovascular circulation, mice were  
203 wrapped in a cotton sheet and, except for the tail, maintained at 37°C within a cylinder  
204 heater. A programmable sensor with an inflatable balloon attached to a tail cuff was  
205 used to monitor tail pulse waves and measure blood pressure when the pulse waves

206 were stable and rhythmic. Blood pressure measurement was read and recorded by the  
207 software. After five consecutive training days, mice were randomly assigned to one of  
208 three groups and injected with saline ( $10 \text{ ml}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.),  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 ( $75 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.)  
209 or CGS 21680 ( $1 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.). Blood pressure was measured at 30 min, 1 h 30 min,  
210 and 2 h 30 min after injection (at each time-point, 20 readings for each mouse were  
211 collected). After testing, the mice were gently picked up by the tail and gently returned  
212 to their cages.

213 The heart rate of the mice was measured by telemetry. Mice were anesthetized with  
214 ketamine hydrochloride ( $80 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.) and xylazine hydrochloride ( $8 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.)  
215 and a PhysioTel F20-ETA mouse telemetry transmitter (Data Science International, St.  
216 Paul, MN) was placed in the midline of the mouse back and fixed with surgical sutures.  
217 The negative (white) electrode was placed in the trapezius muscle, while the positive  
218 (red) electrode was sutured to a muscle in the back opposite the xiphoid process. Each  
219 mouse was singly housed in a cage after surgery with a distance of at least 1 m between  
220 cages to avoid interference between telemetry transmitters. After 7 days of recovery,  
221 the mice were randomly assigned to one of three groups and injected with saline ( $10$   
222  $\text{ml}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.),  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 ( $75 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.), or CGS 21680 ( $1 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.). The  
223 transmitted cardiovascular signal was analyzed for 2 h after the injections using Data  
224 Science International software.

225

### 226 *2.9. Heart rhythm measurement*

227 The cardiac rhythm of mice was measured by electrocardiography (ECG). Mice were  
228 anesthetized with ketamine hydrochloride ( $80 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.) and xylazine hydrochloride  
229 ( $8 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ , i.p.) and fixed with needles on a styrofoam platform. Mice were then gently  
230 pushed into a position where the two front paws and the left rear paw are in contact

231 with 25-gauge needles that served as ECG electrodes. For intracardiac electrography,  
232 the throat of the mice was opened and the internal jugular vein was isolated to insert a  
233 catheter along the course of the vein to the right atrium. Electrographic signals were  
234 5.000-10.000-fold amplified and filtered (0.5-250 Hz) with an AC-601G system (Nihon  
235 Kohden, Tokyo, Japan). The same time period (10:00 – 12:00) was selected for testing  
236 the heart rhythm to avoid normal daily variations in the cardiac rhythm. Mice were  
237 randomly assigned to groups that received A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) or CGS  
238 21680 (1 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) injections. After recording the baseline for 1-2 minutes, mice  
239 were injected with drugs and recording continued for 30 minutes. The data were  
240 analyzed using LabChart Pro software (ADInstruments, Dunedin, New Zealand).

241

#### 242 *2.10. Body temperature measurement*

243 The core body temperature of the mice was measured using Thermochron iButtons (KN  
244 Laboratories, Osaka, Japan). iButtons were programmed to monitor core body  
245 temperature every 5 min for 14 consecutive days beginning at the end of the recovery  
246 period. The mice were anesthetized with pentobarbital (50 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.). The skin of  
247 the abdomen was shaved and cleaned with 70% ethanol and a longitudinal, 2-cm  
248 incision was made along the midline. One iButton cleaned with 70% ethanol was placed  
249 in the peritoneal cavity and the incision was closed with nylon sutures. The mice were  
250 housed individually in cages after surgery and experiments were conducted after a 10-  
251 day recovery period. iButtons were removed from the animals after cervical dislocation  
252 under anesthesia and RhManager software (KN Laboratories, Osaka, Japan) was used  
253 to collect the recorded data from the iButtons.

254

#### 255 *2.11. Synthesis of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1*

256 A solution of 2,3,4-fluorobenzoic acid (1.35 g, 7.68 mmol), 2-fluoro-4-iodoaniline  
257 (1.91 g, 8.06 mmol), and lithium amide (0.702 g, 30.6 mmol) in tetrahydrofuran (10.5  
258 mL) was reacted using a standard method (Cai et al., 2008) to give 3,4-difluoro-2-((2-  
259 fluoro-4-iodophenyl)amino)benzoic acid (A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, 2.99 g, 99%) as a brown solid  
260 (**Figure S1**); IR (KBr) 3311, 1673, 1602, 1520, 1500, 1444, 1273, 768 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  
261 (400 MHz CD<sub>3</sub>OD) δ = 7.89 (1 H, ddd, *J* = 2.3, 6.0, 9.2 Hz), 7.48 (1 H, dd, *J* = 1.8,  
262 10.5 Hz), 7.41 (1 H, ddd, *J* = 1.4, 1.8, 8.5 Hz), 6.91 (1 H, ddd, *J* = 7.3, 9.4, 9.4 Hz), 6.75  
263 (1 H, ddd, *J* = 5.6, 8.5, 8.5 Hz); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz acetone-*d*<sub>6</sub>) δ = 169.9, 155.7 (dd,  
264 *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 252.1, 4.8 Hz), 155.6 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 252.1 Hz), 143.6 (dd, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 247.8, 14.9 Hz), 137.4  
265 (dd, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 7.7, 2.9 Hz), 135.0 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 3.8 Hz), 131.9 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 11.5 Hz), 129.8 (dd, *J*<sub>C,F</sub>  
266 = 9.6, 3.8 Hz), 125.8 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 21.0 Hz), 123.8 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 5.8 Hz), 116.4, 110.1 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub>  
267 = 18.2 Hz), 84.7 (d, *J*<sub>C,F</sub> = 6.7 Hz); HRMS-ESI: *m/z* [M-H]<sup>-</sup> calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>6</sub>F<sub>3</sub>INO<sub>2</sub>,  
268 391.9395; measured, 391.9414.

269

## 270 2.12. Formation of the sodium salt of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1

271 Aqueous sodium hydroxide (100 μM, 754 μL) was added to a stirred solution of A<sub>2A</sub>R  
272 PAM-1 (0.266 g, 75.4 mmol) in ethanol (20.0 mL) at 0°C. The mixture was stirred for  
273 45 min at room temperature and then concentrated in vacuo and freeze-dried. The  
274 residue was dissolved in water and filtered. The filtrate was freeze-dried to obtain the  
275 sodium salt of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (0.265 g, 89%) as a gray solid (m.p. 290–291°C; Anal.  
276 Calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>6</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>·Na·1.5H<sub>2</sub>O: C, 35.32; H, 2.05; N, 3.17. Measured: C, 35.34; H,  
277 1.91; N, 3.14). The sodium salt of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 was used for all *in-vivo* experiments.

278

## 279 2.13. Statistical analysis

280 Statistical analyses were carried out using Systat Software (SigmaPlot). All results are  
281 presented as mean  $\pm$  standard error of the mean (SEM). Two-tailed Student's *t*-tests  
282 were used for statistical comparisons between two groups (Fig. 1A, B, D, E, Fig. 2C,  
283 D, F, Fig. 3B, D, Fig. 4B, Fig. 5A, B, Fig. S2A, B, Fig. S4B, Fig. S5A-C, and Fig. S6A-  
284 C). For *t*-tests, the normality of each dataset was established using the Kolmogorov-  
285 Smirnov test. Two-way repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by  
286 the Tukey test were used for dose-response effects on the amounts of the SWS, REM  
287 sleep, and wakefulness (Fig. 2B, Fig. 3A, C, Fig. 4A, Fig. S3A and Fig. S5A) (Chrivia  
288 et al., 1993). In all of the cases,  $P < 0.05$  was considered significant (significance levels  
289 are indicated in figures as \*:  $P < 0.05$ , \*\*:  $P < 0.01$  or \*\*\*:  $P < 0.001$ ).

290

### 291 **3. Results**

#### 292 *3.1. Screening of small-molecule compounds for allosteric A<sub>2A</sub>R modulation*

293 We established CHO cells that express mouse A<sub>2A</sub>Rs (**Figure S2**) using a retrovirus-  
294 mediated gene transfer method (Kitamura et al., 2003). We used these mA<sub>2A</sub>R-CHO  
295 cells to screen 1173 small-molecule compounds for their allosteric effects at A<sub>2A</sub>Rs.  
296 The compounds were synthesized in Dr. Hiroshi Nagase's laboratory at the University  
297 of Tsukuba. A<sub>2A</sub>R activity in CHO cells was determined by measuring cAMP produced  
298 after adding adenosine and small-molecule compounds using a fluorescence resonance  
299 energy transfer immunoassay. Because a one-compound-one-well approach may be  
300 wasteful research conduct due to a likely small number of active compounds in our  
301 library, we tested initially 391 mixtures containing three compounds each in triplicates.  
302 We selected mixtures that significantly enhanced the effects of adenosine at the A<sub>2A</sub>Rs  
303 ( $P < 0.01$ , unpaired *t*-test) for individual compound testing and found that eight of the  
304 mixtures showed an effect according to this criterion (Mixture 124:  $t_{(4)} = 27.9$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ,

305 Mixture 181:  $t_{(4)}=31.5$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , Mixture 194:  $t_{(4)}=30.9$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , Mixture 211:  
306  $t_{(4)}=9.6$ ,  $P=0.0006$ , Mixture 274:  $t_{(4)}=11$ ,  $P=0.0003$ , Mixture 319:  $t_{(4)}=6.81$ ,  $P=0.0024$ ,  
307 Mixture 332:  $t_{(4)}=8.62$ ,  $P=0.0009$ , Mixture 346:  $t_{(4)}=4.71$   $P=0.0091$ , unpaired  $t$ -test;  
308 **Figure 1A**). Further individual testing of compounds in the eight mixtures revealed that  
309 only compound 371 (3,4-difluoro-2-((2-fluoro-4-iodophenyl)amino)benzoic acid) in  
310 mixture 124 enhanced adenosine-induced  $A_{2A}R$  activation ( $t_{(4)}=9.14$ ,  $P=0.0007$ ,  
311 unpaired  $t$ -test; **Figure 1B**). A cell culture bioassay revealed that cAMP levels were not  
312 altered by treating  $A_{2A}R$ -expressing or native CHO cells with compound 371 in the  
313 absence of adenosine or by treating native CHO with adenosine and compound 371  
314 (**Figure 1C**), suggesting that compound 371 is likely a positive allosteric modulator for  
315  $A_{2A}R$ s, and we therefore named this compound  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. Co-treatment of  $A_{2A}R$ -  
316 expressing CHO cells with 150 nM adenosine and various concentrations of  $A_{2A}R$   
317 PAM-1 (i.e., 25, 50, and 100  $\mu$ M) amplified adenosine  $A_{2A}R$ -evoked cAMP  
318 accumulation in a dose-dependent manner by  $42\% \pm 1.4\%$ ,  $46\% \pm 1.1\%$ , and  $50\% \pm$   
319  $1.0\%$ , respectively (25  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1:  $t_{(4)}=4.47$ ,  $P=0.011$ , 50  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1:  
320  $t_{(4)}=7.21$ ,  $P=0.0019$ , 50  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 vs. 25  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1:  $t_{(4)}=4.71$ ,  $P=0.0092$ ,  
321 100  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1:  $t_{(4)}=9$   $P=0.0008$ , 100  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 vs. 25  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-  
322 1:  $t_{(4)}=8.08$ ,  $P=0.0012$ , 100  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 vs. 50  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1:  $t_{(4)}=3.65$ ,  
323  $P=0.021$ , unpaired  $t$ -test; **Figure 1D**). Similarly, co-treatment of  $A_{2A}R$ -expressing  
324 CHO cells with 100  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 and 50, 100, or 150 nM adenosine increased  
325  $A_{2A}R$  activity in the CHO cells in a dose-dependent manner by  $55\% \pm 0.4\%$ ,  $66\% \pm$   
326  $1.5\%$ , and  $72\% \pm 1.7\%$ , whereas 100  $\mu$ M  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 did not significantly enhance  
327 the cellular activity of  $A_{2A}R$ -expressing CHO cells treated with 250 nM adenosine (50  
328 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(4)}=14.9$ ,  $P=0.0001$ , 50 nM Adenosine vs. 100 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(4)}=7.04$ ,  
329  $P=0.0021$ , 50 nM Adenosine vs. 150 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(3)}=12.40$ ,  $P=0.0011$ , 50 nM

330 Adenosine vs. 250 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(4)}=11.79$ ,  $P=0.00029$ , 100 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(4)}=6.18$ ,  
331  $P=0.034$ , 150 nM Adenosine:  $t_{(3)}=4.98$ ,  $P=0.015$ , unpaired  $t$ -test; **Figure 1E**).

332

### 333 *3.2. Intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces SWS without affecting body* 334 *temperature in mice*

335 We then tested the effect of intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 on the  
336 sleep/wake behavior of wild-type mice. We analyzed EEG and EMG recordings made  
337 after saline or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 injections during the dark period at 22:00, when mice  
338 usually spend most of their time awake. Although baseline sleep and wake of mice 24  
339 h prior to treatment was not significantly different between the saline and A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-  
340 1 groups during the dark period (**Figure S3**), A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 dose-dependently increased  
341 SWS after the injections for the following 8 h (SWS:  $F_{(1,106)}=13.97$ ,  $P=0.033$ , two way  
342 repeated measures ANOVA-Tukey test, 30 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 vs. 60 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R  
343 PAM-1:  $t_{(7)}=4.36$ ,  $P=0.0032$ , 30 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 vs. 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1:  
344  $t_{(6)}=5.45$ ,  $P=0.0015$ , unpaired  $t$ -test; **Figure 2A, B, D**). The total amount of SWS was  
345 increased by  $60.8 \pm 11.4$  min for 8 h with the highest dose of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (i.e., 75  
346 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>) compared with saline treatment, whereas wakefulness was decreased by  $59.2$   
347  $\pm 12.8$  min (SWS:  $t_{(7)}=4.27$ ,  $P=0.0036$ , Wake:  $t_{(7)}=4.33$ ,  $P=0.0034$ , unpaired  $t$ -test;  
348 **Figure 2C**). Intraperitoneal injection of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 did not significantly alter the  
349 REM sleep duration during the dark period compared with saline injection.

350 Administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) to the mice did not significantly  
351 affect the episode numbers of SWS and REM sleep for 8 h in the dark period (**Figure**  
352 **S4A**). On the other hand, wake episode numbers lasting 120 to 239 s increased by 307%  
353 ( $t_{(7)}=3.88$ ,  $P=0.006$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), and wake episode numbers lasting 480 to 959 s  
354 and 960 to 1909 s decreased by 47% ( $t_{(7)}=2.89$ ,  $P=0.02$ , unpaired  $t$ -test) and 88%

355 ( $t_{(7)}=4.60$ ,  $P=0.002$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), respectively, compared with the saline injection.  
356 The mean duration of wake episodes decreased by 38% ( $t_{(7)}=3.38$ ,  $P=0.01$ , unpaired  $t$ -  
357 test) compared with saline, but the duration of the SWS and REM sleep episodes was  
358 not significantly different after A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) administration (**Figure**  
359 **S4B**). A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) also did not significantly affect the number of  
360 transitions between SWS, wake, and REM sleep (**Figure S4C**).  
361 To assess whether EEG activity was altered by A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 administration, we  
362 compared the normalized EEG power spectrum of SWS in mice treated with saline or  
363 A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (**Figure 2E**). EEG activity in the frequency range of 0.5–25 Hz during  
364 SWS was indistinguishable between A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1–induced and natural (saline  
365 injection) SWS. These data suggest that A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induced physiologic sleep rather  
366 than abnormal sleep.

367 We also measured the effect of intraperitoneal administration of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R  
368 PAM-1 or 1 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> of the A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680 (as positive control) on the body  
369 temperature of the mice during the dark period (**Figure 2F**). Although CGS 21680  
370 strongly decreased the body temperature for almost 2 h ( $t_{(10)}=3.68$ ,  $P=0.0042$  at 22:15,  
371  $t_{(10)}=10.48$ ,  $P<0.0001$  at 23:15,  $t_{(10)}=2.33$ ,  $P=0.041$  at 00:05 vs. saline injected group,  
372 unpaired  $t$ -test), A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 did not affect the body temperature of the mice. These  
373 data suggest that A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces physiologic sleep independent of the body  
374 temperature.

375

### 376 *3.3. Sleep-inducing effect of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 was suppressed by blocking A<sub>2A</sub>Rs*

377 We further investigated whether A<sub>2A</sub>Rs mediate the sleep-inducing effect of A<sub>2A</sub>R  
378 PAM-1. First, we pretreated wild-type mice with the selective A<sub>2A</sub>R antagonist  
379 ZM241385 (15 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>, i.p.) or vehicle 30 min before the A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 injection at

380 22:00. The dose of ZM241385 was selected based on previous studies (El Yacoubi et  
381 al., 2000; Nakamura et al., 2016). In the presence of ZM241385, A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 injection  
382 produced no significant changes in SWS (**Figure 3A**), indicating that ZM241385  
383 completely blocked the A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1-induced SWS. When we calculated the total  
384 amount of SWS for 4 h after the intraperitoneal injection of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (**Figure 3B**),  
385 we found that it did not significantly alter the total amount of SWS after ZM241385  
386 pretreatment. ZM241385 pretreatment alone also had no significant effect on SWS  
387 compared with vehicle pretreatment (Vehicle + Saline vs. Vehicle + 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R  
388 PAM-1:  $t_{(8)}=4.04$ ,  $P=0.0037$ , 15 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> ZM241385 + 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 vs.  
389 Vehicle + 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1:  $t_{(8)}=2.63$ ,  $P=0.029$ , 15 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> ZM241385 +  
390 Saline vs. Vehicle + 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1:  $t_{(8)}=6.10$ ,  $P=0.00028$ , unpaired *t*-test;  
391 **Figure 3B**).

392 We then administered 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (i.p.) into A<sub>2A</sub>R KO mice and their  
393 wild-type littermates at 22:00. We observed no significant changes in SWS in the A<sub>2A</sub>R  
394 KO mice compared with saline treatment, whereas SWS was increased by  $74.3 \pm 12.0$   
395 min for 6 h in wild-type littermates of A<sub>2A</sub>R KO mice ( $F_{(1,190)}=20.83$ ,  $P=0.003$ , two way  
396 repeated measures ANOVA-Tukey test,  $t_{(14)}=5.63$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , unpaired *t*-test; **Figure**  
397 **3C, D**). Concomitantly, wakefulness was decreased in the wild-type littermates of A<sub>2A</sub>R  
398 KO mice ( $F_{(1,190)}=16.14$ ,  $P=0.005$ , two way repeated measures ANOVA-Tukey test,  
399  $t_{(14)}=5.50$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , unpaired *t*-test), whereas neither REM sleep in these mice nor  
400 wakefulness and REM sleep in the KO mice were affected by intraperitoneal  
401 administration of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (**Figure S5**). Baseline sleep and wake of  
402 the KO mice and their wild-type littermates 24 h prior to treatment was not different  
403 between the saline and A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 groups during the dark period (data not shown).  
404 These findings suggest that A<sub>2A</sub>R are necessary for A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 to induce SWS.

405

406 *3.4. Intracerebroventricular administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces SWS in mice*

407 To elucidate whether the sleep-inducing effect of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 is mediated via A<sub>2A</sub>Rs  
408 expressed in the brain, we infused A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 into the lateral ventricle of wild-type  
409 mice at 200 nmol·h<sup>-1</sup> during the dark period (20:00 to 8:00) and assessed EEG and  
410 EMG activity. Infusion with A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 for 12 h increased the time spent in SWS 5  
411 h after the infusion, resulting in a total SWS increase during the dark period of 141.6 ±  
412 12.5 min compared with saline infusion ( $F_{(1,118)}=34.40$ ,  $P=0.004$ , two way repeated  
413 measures ANOVA-Tukey test,  $t_{(8)}=5.67$ ,  $P=0.00047$ , unpaired  $t$ -test; **Figure 4A, B**).  
414 Concomitantly, total wakefulness was decreased by 145.5 ± 15.8 min during a 12-h  
415 i.c.v. infusion of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 ( $F_{(1,118)}=43.46$ ,  $P=0.003$ , two way repeated measures  
416 ANOVA-Tukey test,  $t_{(8)}=5.08$ ,  $P=0.00095$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), whereas REM sleep was  
417 not affected.

418 Intracerebroventricular infusion of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (200 nmol·h<sup>-1</sup>) into mice affected  
419 SWS and wake episode numbers during the dark period (**Figure S6A**). SWS episode  
420 numbers lasting 0 to 29 s, 30 to 59 s, and 60 to 120 s increased by 267% ( $t_{(8)}=7.56$ ,  
421  $P<0.0001$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), 196% ( $t_{(8)}=3.47$ ,  $P=0.008$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), and 154%  
422 ( $t_{(8)}=2.88$ ,  $P=0.02$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), respectively, and wake episode numbers lasting 0  
423 to 29 s, 30 to 59 s, and 60 to 120 s also increased by 205% ( $t_{(8)}=3.97$ ,  $P=0.004$ , unpaired  
424  $t$ -test), 177% ( $t_{(8)}=3.55$ ,  $P=0.007$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), and 137% ( $t_{(8)}=2.77$ ,  $P=0.02$ ,  
425 unpaired  $t$ -test), respectively, compared with saline infusion. On the other hand, episode  
426 numbers of REM sleep were not significantly affected by A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 infusion (200  
427 nmol·h<sup>-1</sup>, i.c.v.). The mean duration of wake episodes decreased by 72% ( $t_{(8)}=3.06$ ,  
428  $P=0.01$ , unpaired  $t$ -test) compared with the saline-infused group, but mean episode  
429 duration of the SWS and REM sleep did not significantly change after A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1

430 (200 nmol·h<sup>-1</sup>, i.c.v.) administration (**Figure S6B**). A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (200 nmol·h<sup>-1</sup>, i.c.v.)  
431 increased the number of transitions between SWS and wakefulness by 148% ( $t_{(8)}=4.91$ ,  
432  $P=0.001$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), and from wakefulness to SWS by 128% ( $t_{(8)}=4.26$ ,  $P=0.002$ ,  
433 unpaired  $t$ -test) compared with the saline-infused group (**Figure S6C**).  
434 Moreover, the EEG activity in the frequency range of 0.5–25 Hz during SWS episodes  
435 was indistinguishable between mice treated with saline or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (**Figure 4C**).  
436 These data suggest that A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces physiologic sleep rather than abnormal  
437 sleep via A<sub>2A</sub>Rs that are likely expressed in the brain.

438

439 *3.5. Intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 does not affect blood pressure or*  
440 *heart rate*

441 A<sub>2A</sub>R agonists evoke cardiovascular effects (Hutchison et al., 1989; Kirkup et al., 1998;  
442 Nekooeian and Tabrizchi, 1996). We therefore tested the effect of intraperitoneal  
443 administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 on blood pressure and heart rate in wild-type mice. First,  
444 we measured blood pressure in mice 30, 90, and 150 min after intraperitoneal injection  
445 of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 or 1 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> of the A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680 using an  
446 electrophygmomanometer (**Figure 5A**). The dose of the A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680 was  
447 selected based on previous studies in mice (Carvalho et al., 2017; Nakav et al., 2008;  
448 Ohta and Sitkovsky, 2001). Compared with saline treatment, the systolic, and diastolic  
449 blood pressures were significantly decreased for up to 90 min after injecting the A<sub>2A</sub>R  
450 agonist CGS 21680 (SBP at 30 min:  $t_{(9)}=10.55$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , SBP at 90 min:  $t_{(9)}=7.51$ ,  
451  $P<0.0001$ , DBP at 30 min:  $t_{(9)}=6.60$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , DBP at 90 min:  $t_{(9)}=5.86$ ,  $P<0.0001$ ,  
452 unpaired  $t$ -test) and returned to normal levels within 150 min after the injection. In  
453 contrast, blood pressure was not changed after intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R  
454 PAM-1 (75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>) at 30, 90, or 150 min after treatment. In addition, we measured

455 the heart rate of mice after intraperitoneal injection of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 or 1  
456 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680 using the telemetry implants (**Figure 5B**). The heart  
457 rate of the mice increased after intraperitoneal administration of the A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS  
458 21680 (HR at 60 min:  $t_{(8)}=2.34$ ,  $P=0.047$ , HR at 75 min:  $t_{(8)}=2.90$ ,  $P=0.019$ , HR at 90  
459 min:  $t_{(8)}=2.80$ ,  $P=0.023$ , unpaired  $t$ -test), whereas the heart rate was not affected by  
460 injection of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1. Finally, we monitored the heart rhythm in  
461 anesthetized mice after intraperitoneal administration of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 or  
462 1 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> of A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680 using intracardiac EGM. We observed sinus  
463 arrhythmia in mice after intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist CGS 21680,  
464 whereas injection of 75 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup> A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 did not cause abnormalities of the cardiac  
465 rhythm (**Figure 5C**).

466

#### 467 **4. Discussion**

468 Our observations suggest that enhancing A<sub>2A</sub>R signaling by intraperitoneal  
469 administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces SWS without cardiovascular effects in mice.  
470 Therefore, A<sub>2A</sub>R-modulating compounds may provide safe options for the treatment of  
471 insomnia and poor-quality sleep.

472 Over the past century, several putative hypnogenic substances implicated in the sleep  
473 homeostatic process have been identified, including prostaglandin D<sub>2</sub> (Qu et al., 2006),  
474 cytokines (Krueger et al., 1984), anandamide (García-García et al., 2009), urotensin II  
475 peptide (Huitron-Resendiz et al., 2005), and adenosine (Porkka-Heiskanen et al., 1997).  
476 Adenosine represents a state of relative energy deficiency: ATP depletion positively  
477 correlates with an increase in extracellular adenosine levels (Kalinchuk et al., 2003)  
478 and positively associates with sleep (Porkka-Heiskanen et al., 1997). Adenosine levels  
479 in samples collected from several brain areas of cats during spontaneous sleep-wake

480 cycles by *in vivo* microdialysis were higher during SWS than during wakefulness for  
481 all probed brain areas (Porkka-Heiskanen et al., 1997). The observation in animals that  
482 adenosine levels are elevated during prolonged wakefulness may explain why an  
483 allosteric modulator could effectively enhance the sleep-inducing effect of endogenous  
484 adenosine in the brain. On the other hand, adenosine is absent or its concentration is  
485 too low in the cardiovascular system under physiologic conditions to affect blood  
486 pressure and heart function after administration of an allosteric modulator of A<sub>2A</sub>R.  
487 Medicinal chemistry for A<sub>2A</sub>Rs has been widely developed in recent decades for use in  
488 myocardial perfusion imaging and the treatment of inflammation and neuropathic pain  
489 (de Lera Ruiz et al., 2014). Several A<sub>2A</sub>R agonists that entered clinical trials elicited  
490 undesirable side effects, however, thus precluding their further development. On the  
491 other hand, allosteric modulators bind at a distinct site other than the natural ligand  
492 binding site (i.e., the orthosteric site) and exert their effects only in the presence of the  
493 orthosteric ligand (Wenthur et al., 2014). As a consequence, an allosteric modulator  
494 mimics the activity duration of the natural ligand and thus the pharmacologic response  
495 of an allosteric modulator more closely resembles the natural physiologic activity of  
496 the receptor than is possible with a synthetic agonist. Because efforts to evoke  
497 pharmacologic A<sub>2A</sub>R responses have focused almost exclusively on the use of  
498 orthosteric ligands, however, the possibility that A<sub>2A</sub>R responses, especially in the brain,  
499 can be fine-tuned using allosteric modulators has received very little attention (Göblyös  
500 and Ijzerman, 2009).

501 Moreover, it is widely accepted that the basic adenosine scaffold must be maintained  
502 in an A<sub>2A</sub>R agonist (Fredholm et al., 2011). Thus, the development of adenosine analogs  
503 for treating the central nervous system, including sleep induction for treating insomnia,  
504 is restricted by the poor transport of these drugs through the brain endothelial cells,

505 which are connected by tight junctions to establish a blood-brain barrier (BBB)  
506 (Pardridge et al., 1994). In contrast, A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, when administered intraperitoneally,  
507 exhibits a sleep-inducing effect that is likely mediated by A<sub>2A</sub>Rs in the brain and thus  
508 appears to cross the BBB. Small lipophilic monocarboxylates like A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 likely  
509 pass through the BBB by passive diffusion or via a monocarboxylate transport system  
510 (Tsuji, 2005). Therefore, allosteric modulation of A<sub>2A</sub>Rs has the potential to cause  
511 pharmacologic effects in the central nervous system after systemic administration,  
512 resulting in good quality sleep.

513 Our study did not investigate how and where the A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 binds at the receptor to  
514 exert its allosteric effect. Therefore, an important next step will be to examine the  
515 allosteric interactions of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 and the receptor using binding assays and crystal  
516 structure analysis. With respect to the latter, a crystal structure of the human A<sub>2A</sub>R  
517 bound to a bitopic antagonist revealed a potential allosteric pocket (Sun et al., 2017)  
518 and another study suggested that a sodium ion binding site can be exploited for  
519 allosteric modulation of A<sub>2A</sub>R (Gutiérrez-de-Terán et al., 2013). Moreover, to solidify  
520 the sleep enhancing effect of the A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, it may be necessary to test the A<sub>2A</sub>R  
521 PAM-1 in mice at the time of normal sleep onset, i.e., A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 administration at  
522 the onset of the light period, or in an animal model of insomnia, for example, a mouse  
523 model mimicking the human first-night effect (Xu et al., 2014).

524 Due to work schedules and expectations, lifestyle choices, pre-existing medical  
525 conditions, or aging, people are coping with an increasingly wide range of sleep  
526 problems, including difficulties with falling and staying asleep, waking up too early,  
527 and poor-quality ("non-restorative") sleep. Deficiencies in sleep cause significant social  
528 losses due to increased prevalence of mood disorders, lead to decreased economic  
529 productivity, and are linked to traffic and work-related accidents due to excessive

530 daytime sleepiness (Groeger et al., 2004; Saddichha, 2010; Sutton et al., 2001).  
531 Insufficient sleep is not only by itself a major problem in modern society, but is also an  
532 established risk factor for obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other lifestyle diseases  
533 (Colten et al., 2006). Moreover, psychiatric illnesses, especially anxiety and mood  
534 disorders, are long recognized to be a frequent cause of insomnia (Okuji et al., 2002).

535

## 536 **5. Conclusions**

537 The findings of our study indicate that enhancing A<sub>2A</sub>R signaling promotes SWS  
538 without cardiovascular effects. Therefore, small molecules that allosterically modulate  
539 A<sub>2A</sub>Rs could help people with sleep problems to fall asleep and thus also be a potential  
540 treatment for psychiatric disorders.

541 Our study was conducted in mice, the most commonly used model organism of human  
542 disease. Results in mice, however, are not particularly reliable for predicting human  
543 study outcomes, mostly due to the limited genetic diversity associated with common  
544 laboratory mice. Therefore, many obstacles remain to be overcome in generating a  
545 novel drug for the treatment of insomnia in humans.

546

547

## 548 **Conflicts of Interests**

549 The authors declare no competing financial interests.

550

## 551 **Author contributions**

552 M.K., N.M., Y.C., F.S., and M.L. designed the experiments. M.K., F.D., R.Q., S.F., and  
553 X.Z. collected and analyzed the data. T.S., S.I., and H.N. synthesized chemical

554 compounds, J.C. and H.K. contributed mouse or cell lines, M.K., Y.C., and M.L. wrote  
555 the paper. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

556

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566

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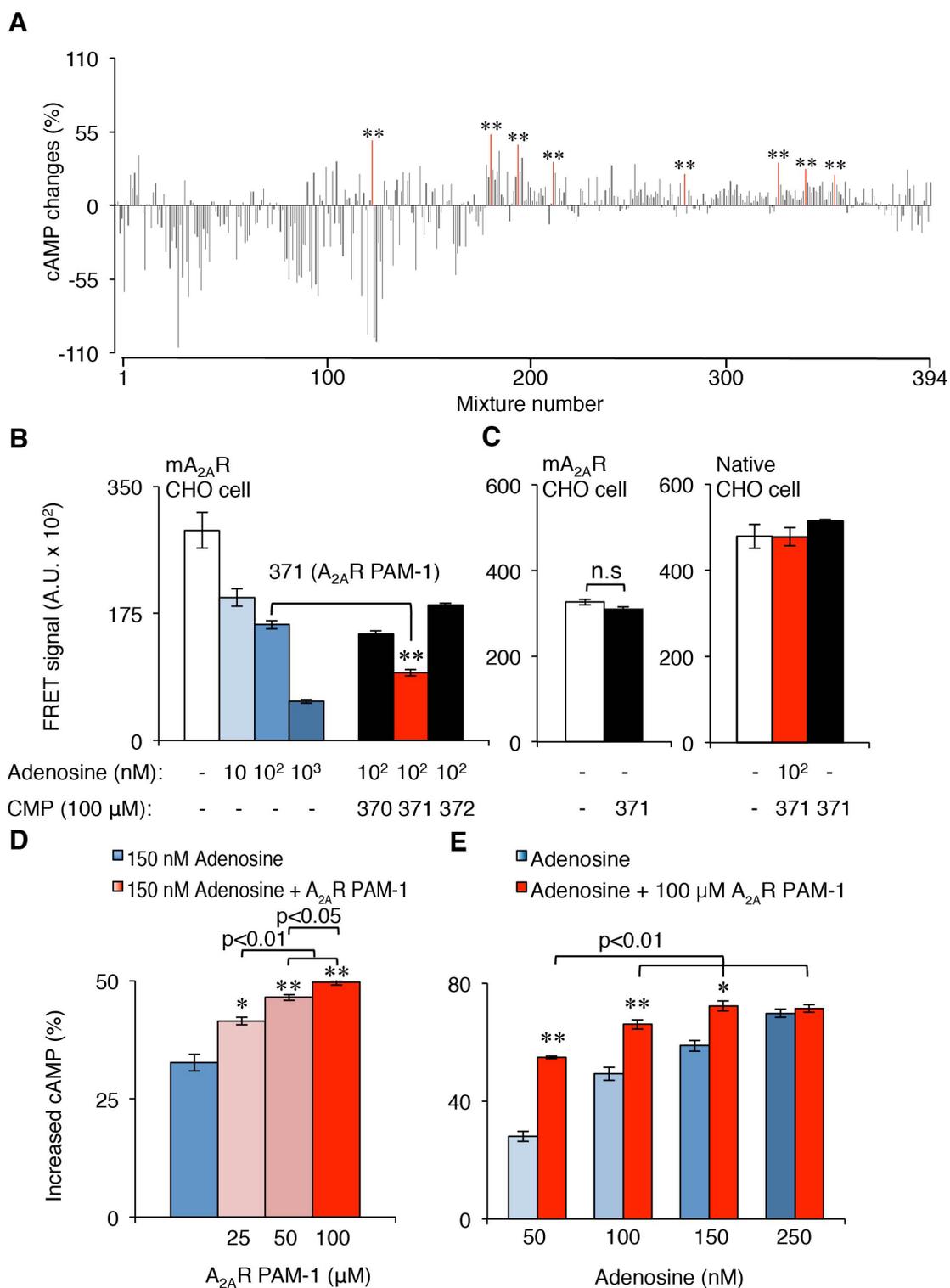
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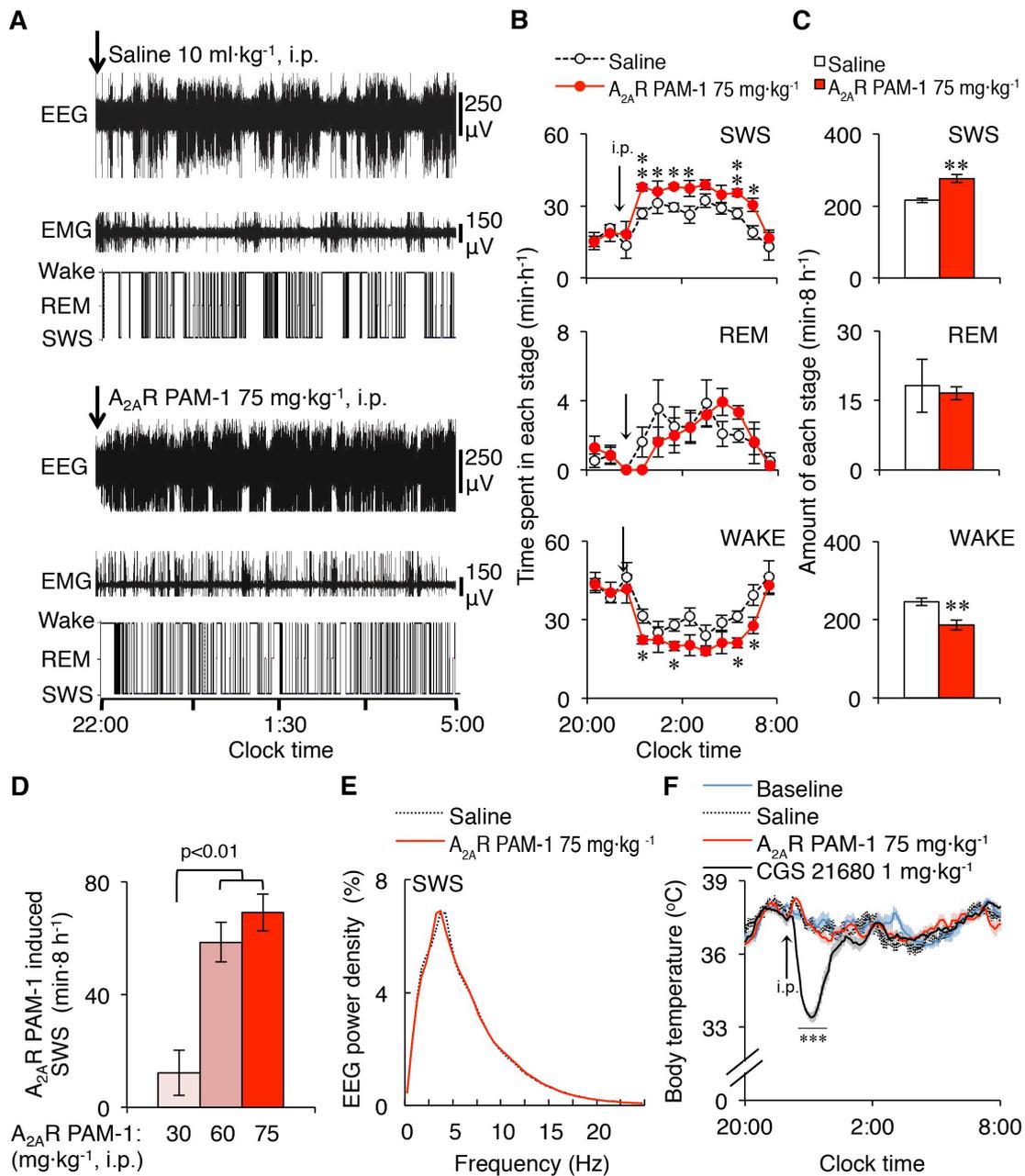
737

738 **Fig. 1.** Co-treatment of mA<sub>2A</sub>R-CHO cells with A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 and adenosine revealed

739 allosteric modulation. (A) High-throughput screening of small-molecule compounds.

740 Changes of cAMP levels in CHO cells after treatment with adenosine and compound

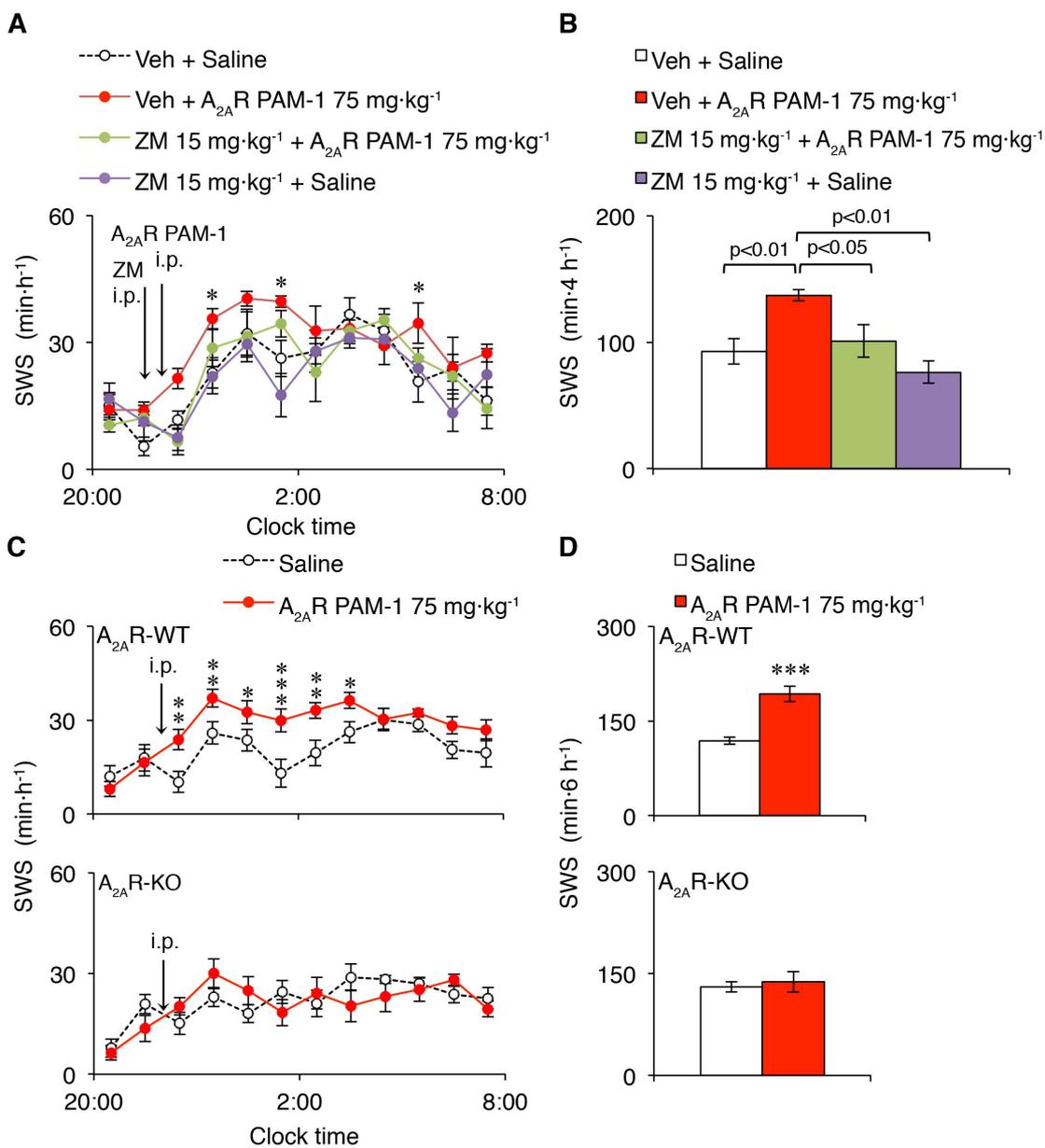
741 mixtures are shown as percentage of cAMP levels in CHO cells after treatment with  
742 adenosine. Screening experiments were performed in triplicate wells. (B) FRET  
743 activity in mA<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing CHO cells after treatment with adenosine and small  
744 molecule compounds 370, 371, or 372. (C) FRET activity in mA<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing (left  
745 panel) and native (right panel) CHO cells after treatment with adenosine or adenosine  
746 and A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, respectively. (D, E) Dose-dependent changes of cAMP level in  
747 mA<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing CHO cells after treatment with adenosine and different  
748 concentrations of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (D) or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 and different concentrations of  
749 adenosine (E). (B-E) Experiments were performed in triplicate wells for each condition  
750 and repeated at least twice. Representative data are shown. Data are presented as mean  
751 ± SEM.



752

753 **Fig. 2.** Intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 induces SWS without affecting  
 754 body temperature in mice. (A) Typical examples of EEG, EMG, and hypnograms of a  
 755 mouse after the administration of saline (top panel) or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (bottom panel). (B,  
 756 C) Time-courses (B) and total amounts (C) of SWS, REM sleep, and wakefulness in  
 757 mice after intraperitoneal administration of saline or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1. (D) Dose-  
 758 dependent changes in SWS time during 8 h after A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 administration  
 759 normalised to the SWS time of the vehicle control. (E) EEG power density of SWS for

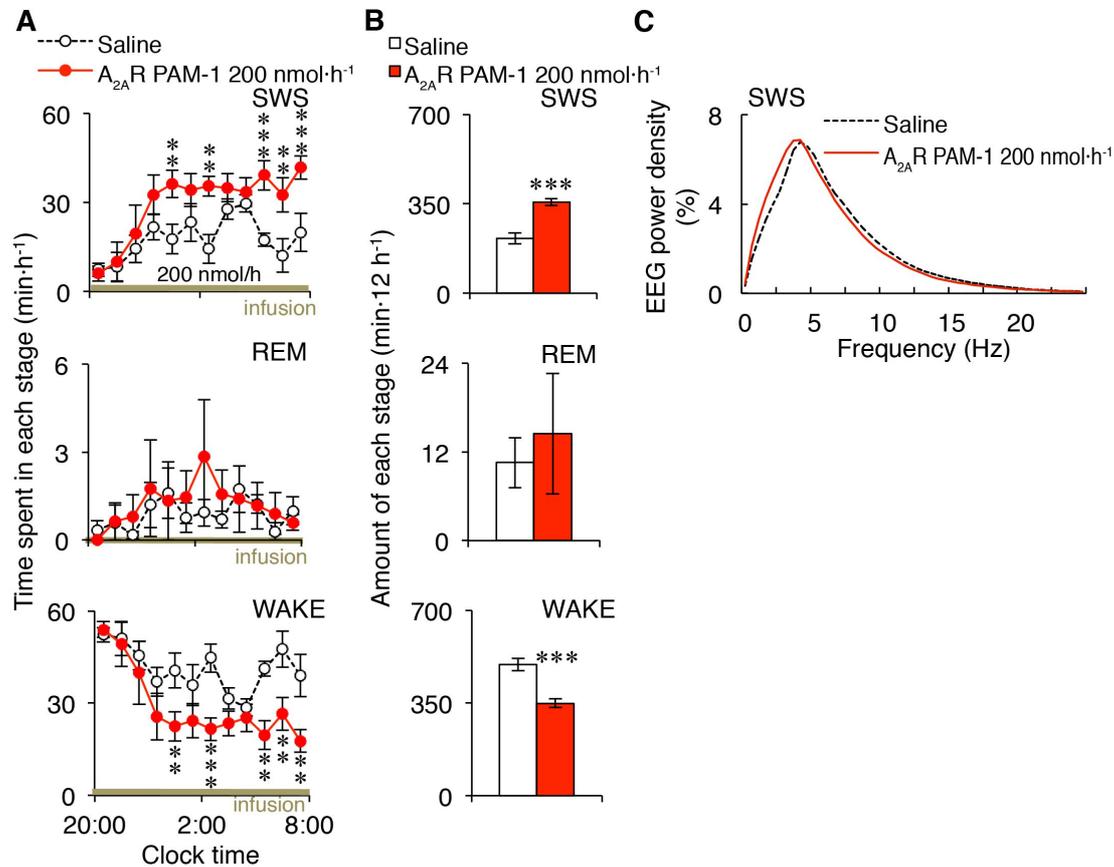
760 8 h after saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 administration. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  SEM  
 761 (n=5/group). (F) Body temperature of mice after intraperitoneal administration of saline,  
 762  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 or CGS 21680. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  SEM (n=6/group).  
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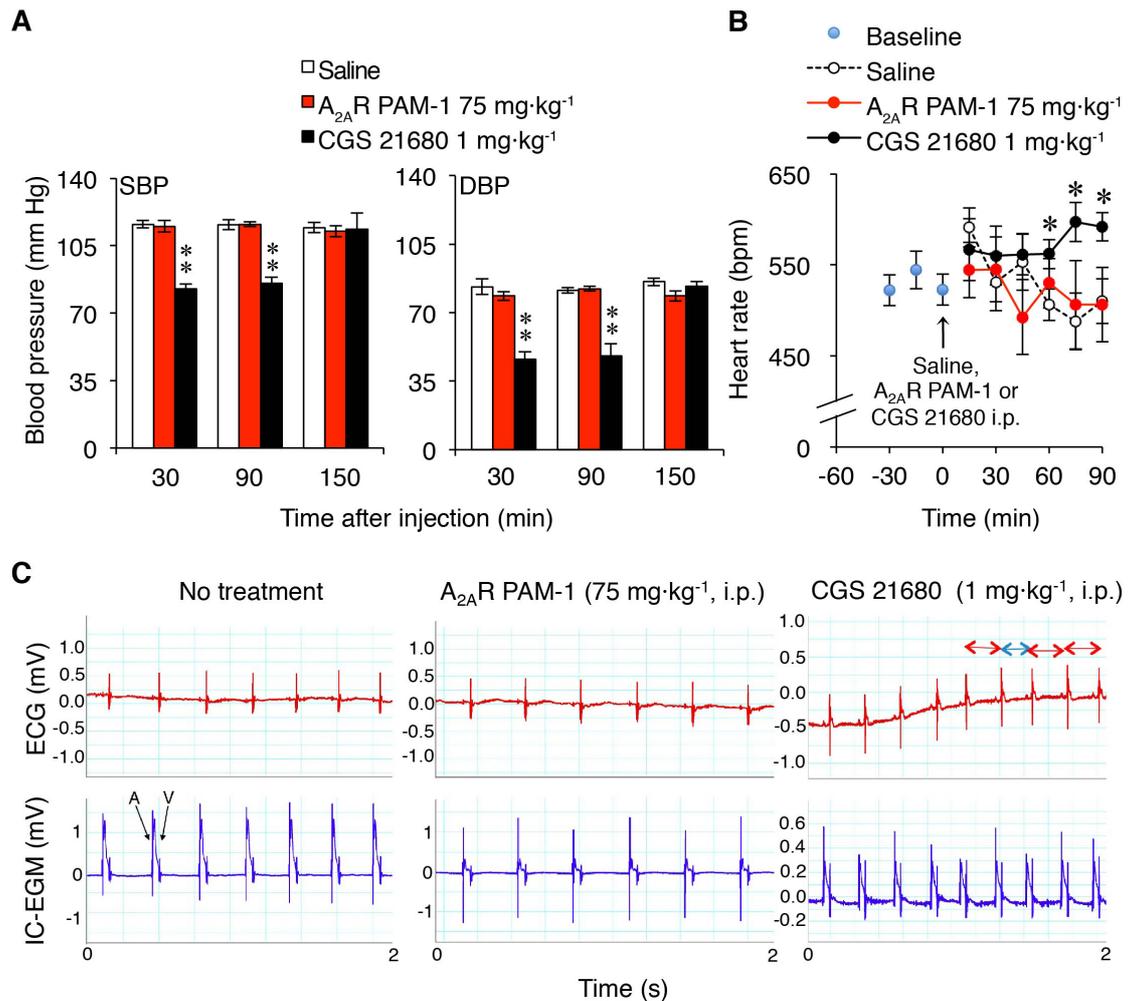
765 **Fig. 3.** Sleep inducing effect of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 depends on adenosine  $A_{2A}R$  in mice. (A,  
 766 B) Time-courses (A) and total amount (B) of SWS in mice pretreated with vehicle or  
 767 the  $A_{2A}R$  antagonist ZM 241385 after administration of saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1  
 768 (n=5/group, respectively). (C, D) Time-courses (C) and total amount (D) of SWS in

769 wild-type (top panels) or  $A_{2A}R$  KO mice (bottom panels) after administration of saline  
 770 or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 (8/group). Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  SEM.  
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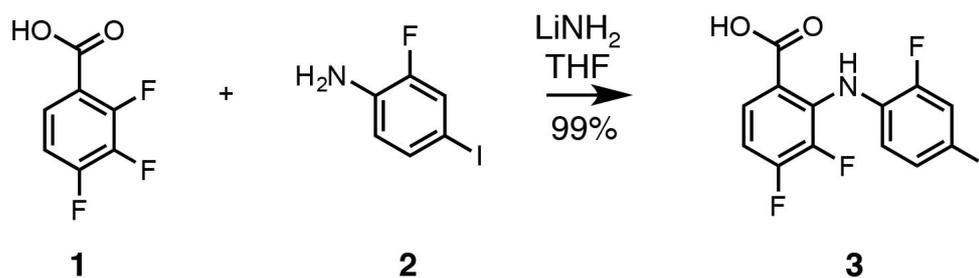
773 **Fig. 4.** Intracerebroventricular infusion of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 induced SWS in mice. (A, B)  
 774 Time-courses (A) and total amount of SWS, REM sleep, and wakefulness (B) in mice  
 775 after intracerebroventricular infusion of saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. (C) EEG power density  
 776 of SWS during the infusion of saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$   
 777 SEM (n=5/group).



778

779 **Fig. 5.** A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 does not affect the cardiovascular system. (A) Systolic, and  
 780 diastolic blood pressure after A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 or CGS 21680 injection in mice  
 781 (n=5/group). (B) Heart rate of mice after injection of saline, A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1, or CGS  
 782 21680, assessed by the telemetry implants (n=5/group). (A, B) Data are presented as  
 783 mean ± SEM. (C) Typical heart rhythm profiles of mice without treatment (left panel)  
 784 or after administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1 (middle panel) or CGS 21680 (right panel). Red  
 785 and blue left/right arrows in the right panel indicate sinus arrhythmia. Abbreviations  
 786 used: SBP, systolic blood pressure; DBP, diastolic blood pressure; ECG,  
 787 electrocardiogram; IC-EGM, intracardiac electrogram; A, atrial signal; V, ventricular  
 788 signal.

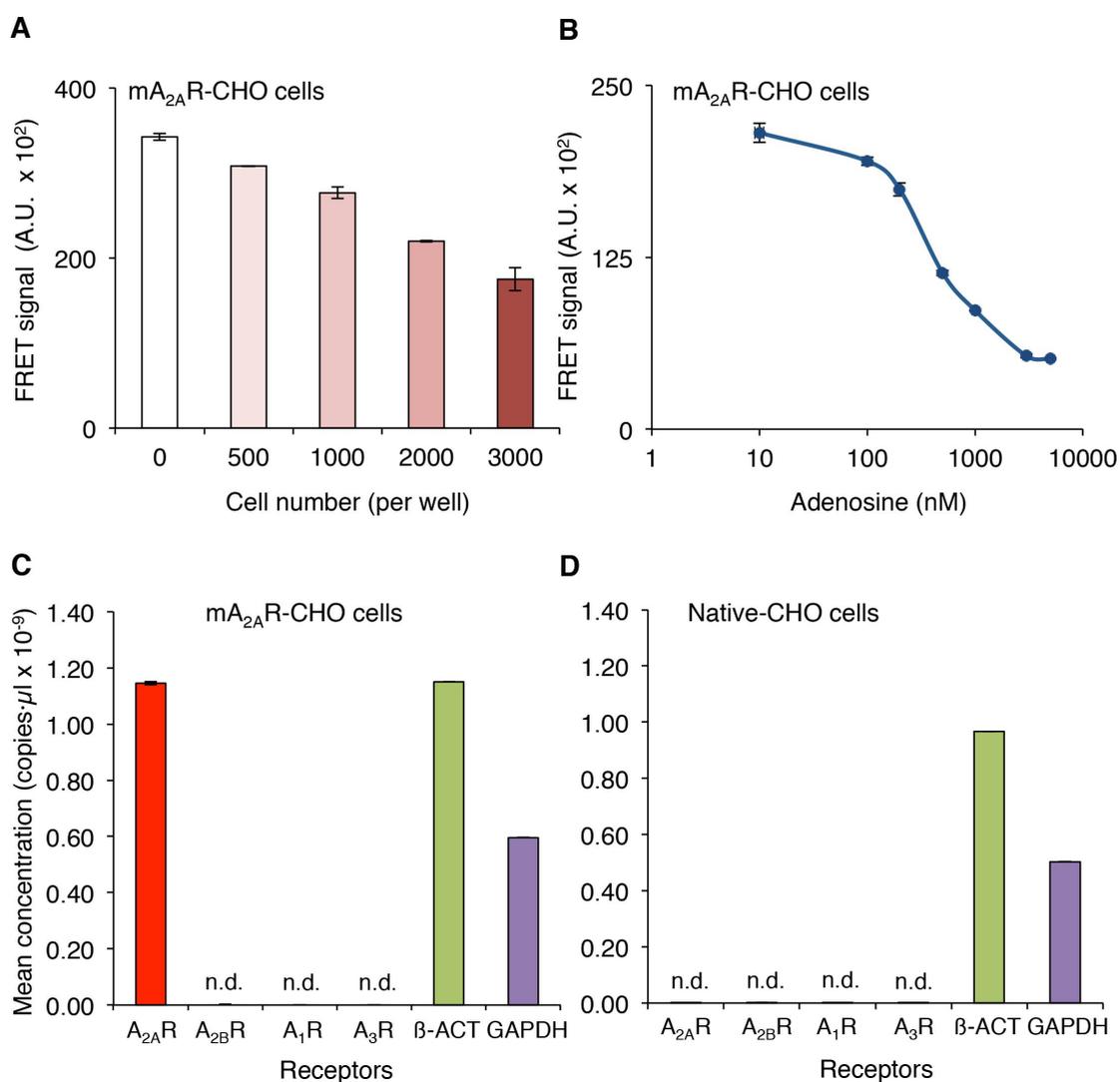
789 **Supplementary figures and legends**



790

791 **Fig. S1.** Chemical synthesis of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1.  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1 (**3**) was produced by  
 792 combining 2,3,4-fluorobenzoic acid (**1**) and 2-fluoro-4-iodoaniline (**2**).

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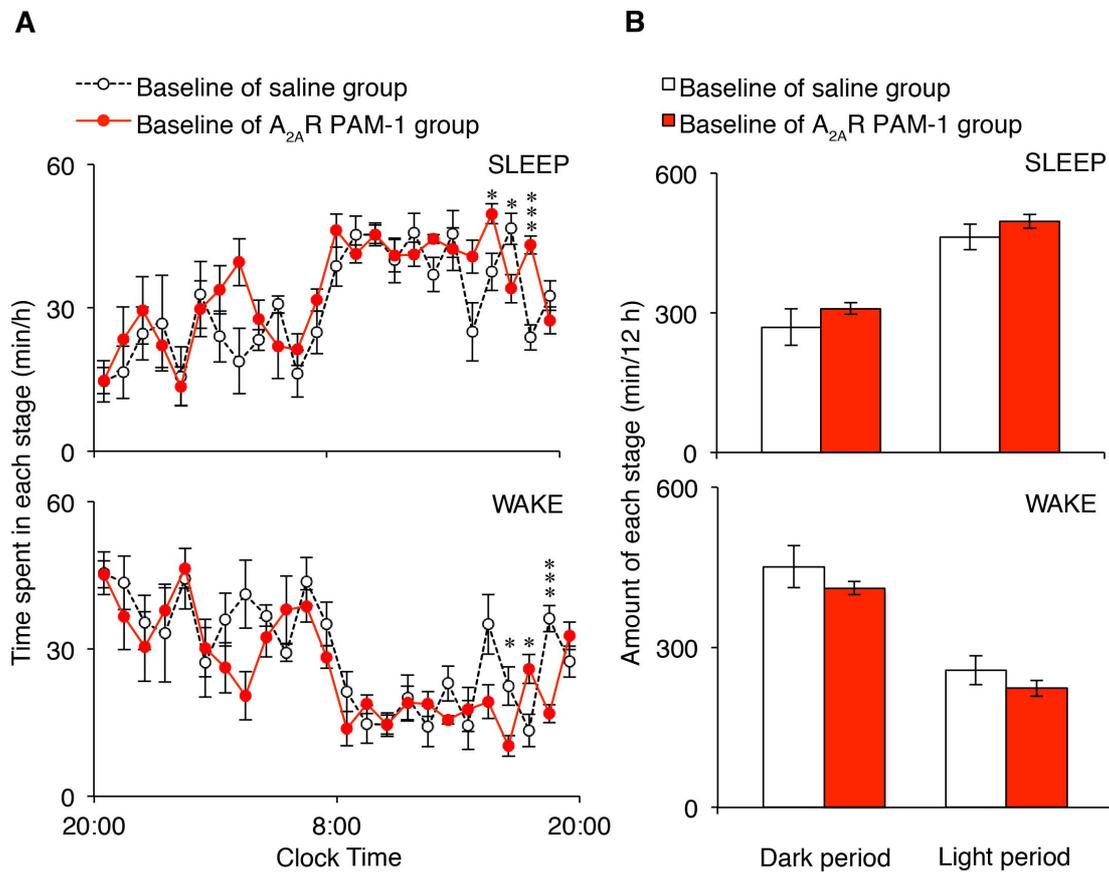
795 **Fig. S2.** Characterization of mouse  $A_{2A}R$ -expressing CHO cells. (A) Cell number-  
 796 dependent FRET activity of  $mA_{2A}R$ -expressing CHO. (B) Dose-dependent changes of

797 FRET activity in mA<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing CHO after adenosine administration. (C)

798 Expression of Chinese hamster adenosine receptors in mA<sub>2A</sub>R-expressing (left panel)

799 and native (right panel) CHO cells.

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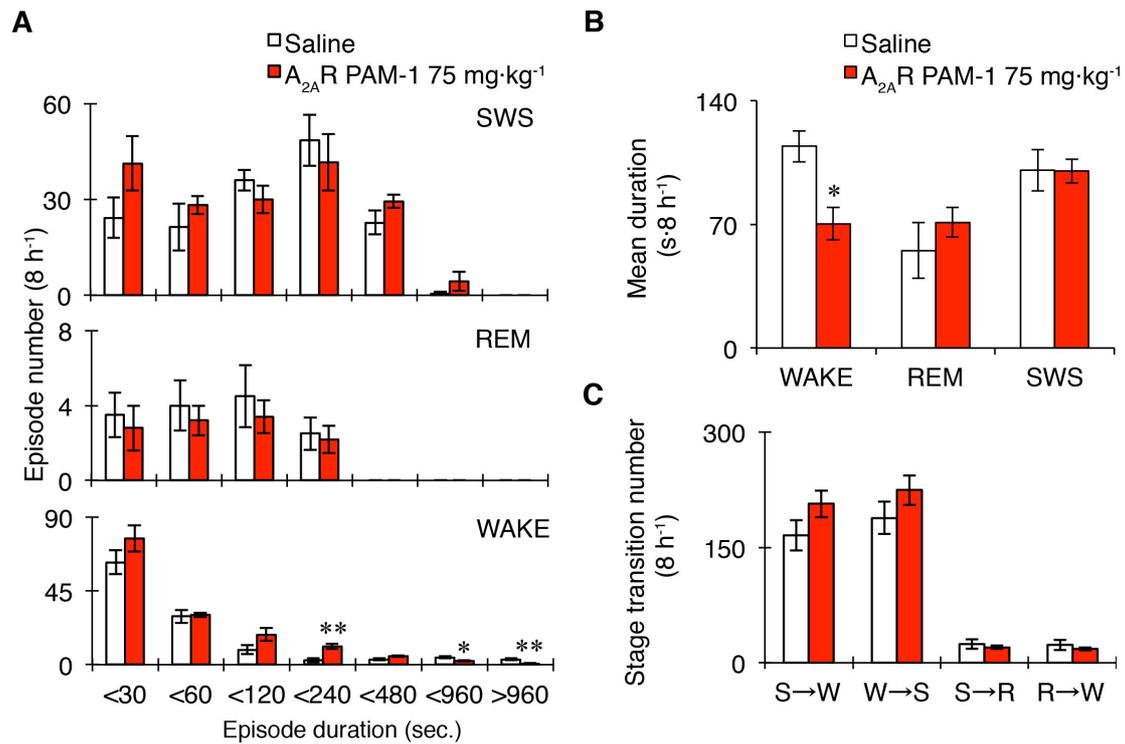
802 **Fig. S3. Baseline sleep/wake profile of the mice before treatment.** (A, B) Time-

803 courses (A) and total amount of sleep (top panels; combined SWS and REM sleep

804 amounts) and wakefulness (bottom panels) in mice over 24 h. Data are presented as

805 mean ± SEM (n=5/group).

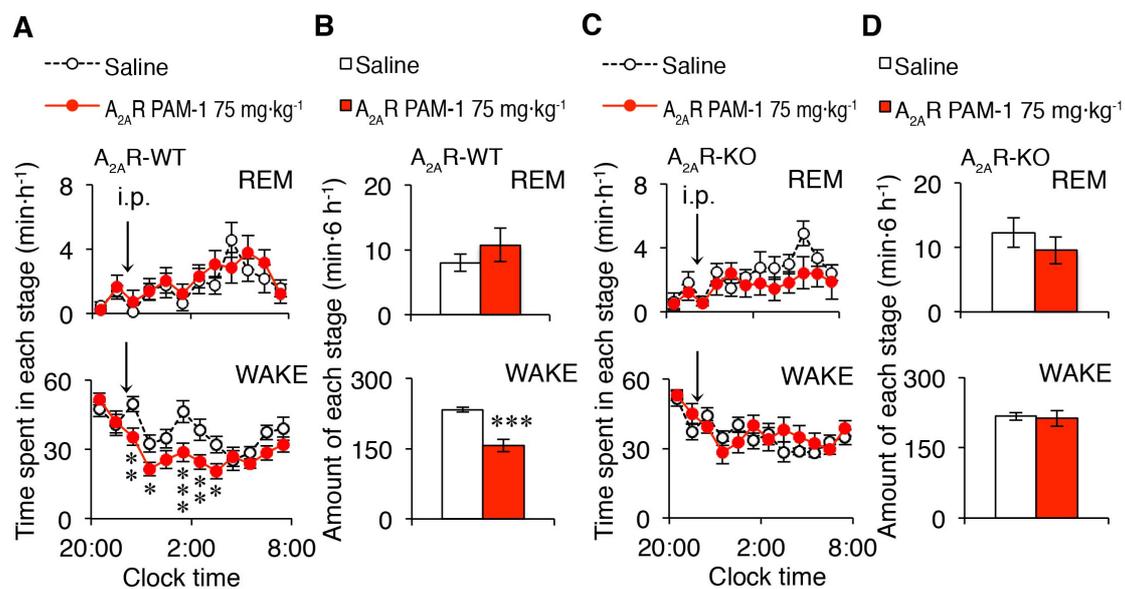
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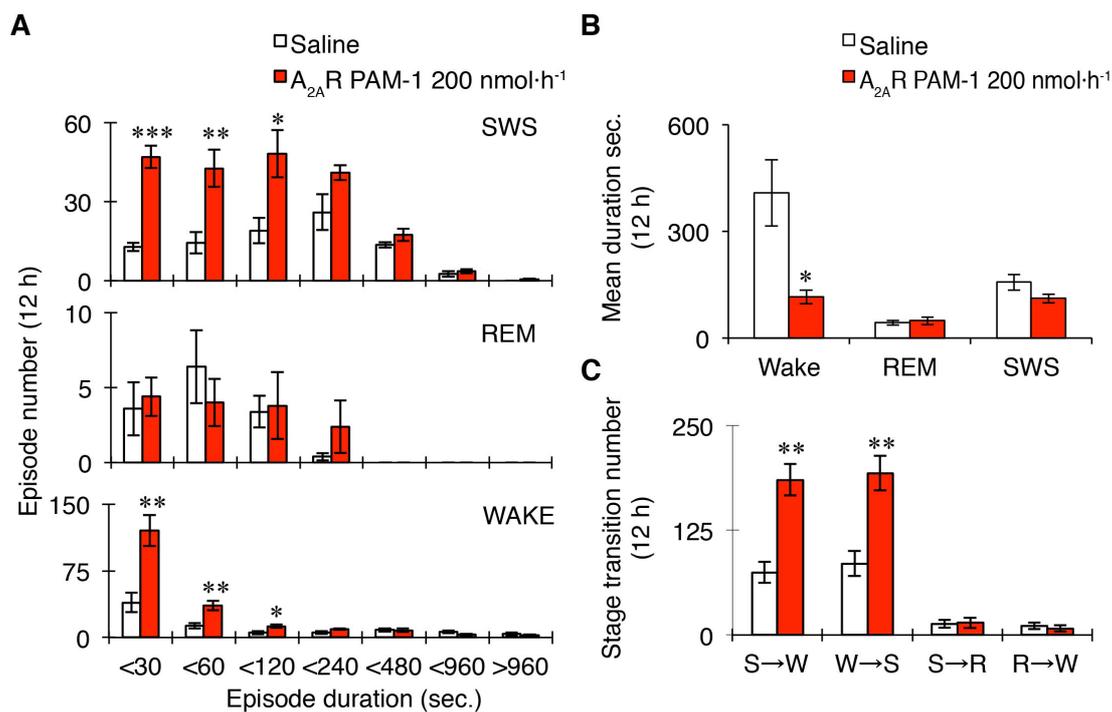
808 **Fig. S4.** Sleep architecture of mice after intraperitoneal administration of A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1.  
 809 1. (A, B) Episode number (A) and mean duration (B) of each stage after administration  
 810 of saline or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1. (C) Transitions between SWS (S), REM sleep (R), and wake  
 811 (W) stages after administration of saline or A<sub>2A</sub>R PAM-1. Data are presented as mean  
 812 ± SEM (n=5/group).

813



814

815 **Fig. S5.** REM sleep and wakefulness in wild-type and  $A_{2A}R$  KO mice after  
 816 intraperitoneal administration of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. (A-D) Time-courses (A and C) and total  
 817 amount (B and D) of REM sleep (top panels) and wakefulness (bottom panels) in wild-  
 818 type (A and B) and  $A_{2A}R$  KO mice (C and D). Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  SEM  
 819 (n=8/group).  
 820



821

822 **Fig. S6.** Sleep architecture of mice after intracerebroventricular infusion of  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-  
 823 1. (A, B) Episode number (A) and mean duration (B) of each stage after infusion of  
 824 saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. (C) Transitions between SWS (S), REM sleep (R), and wake  
 825 (W) stages after infusion of saline or  $A_{2A}R$  PAM-1. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  SEM  
 826 (n=5/group).  
 827