

# 'Blue Block' Glasses Will Help You Get Sound Sleep

By Amitabh Saxena

As an undergrad at the University of Waterloo, Amol Rao had a problem. He was not getting enough sleep in the nights and would thus wake up feeling tired in the morning when it was time for the classes. The problem persisted even when he started going to bed much earlier than his normal time of 1 am. And he discovered that this was a common problem with many of his college mates.

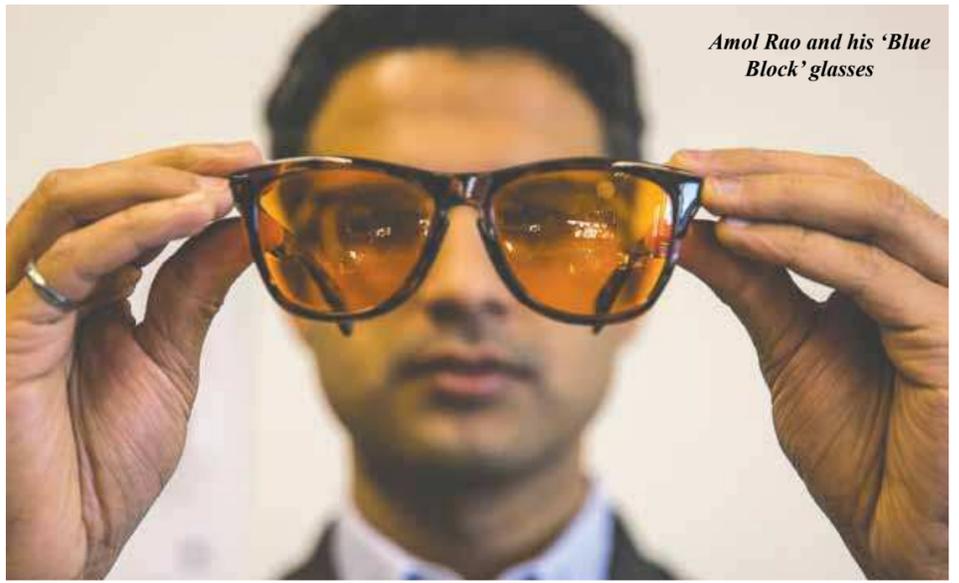
Amol did his research and discovered that the culprit was actually the 'Blue light' that emits from the screens of all the common electronic devices that we use in the evening hours, be it a smartphone, a tablet, a laptop or the ubiquitous TV.

Since the early 20th century, scientists have known that light plays a major role in our circadian rhythm. Before the industrial revolution, the primary source of light was the sun. Because our

eyes do not differentiate between artificial and sunlight, exposure to electronic light at night results in a similar circadian response as exposure to sunlight. Also, light in the blue portion of the visual spectrum causes the most circadian disruption. The result...we sleep later than usual and wake up later than usual.

Cut to Circa 2016 and Amol who is now pursuing Industrial Engineering at the University of Toronto discovers that the solution to this disruption of natural sleep patterns due to constant exposure to blue light is quite simple...Blue Block Glasses. A study conducted by Harvard University recommends "if you work a night shift or use a lot of electronic devices at night, consider wearing blue light blocking glasses".

Enter SOMNITUDE, a startup by Amol which is devoted to harnessing circadian science to improve sleep and health. Somnitude markets a range of Blue Block glasses. These glasses filter 99%



Amol Rao and his 'Blue Block' glasses

of full spectrum blue light. These glasses are worn in the hours before bedtime. One can still watch TV, and use electronic devices - as long as one has the glasses on. It helps with sleep by filtering out the blue light from the visual

spectrum. Somnitude's Blue block glasses were recently used by Olympians in Pyeongchang.

Amol truly believes that his Blue Block Glasses hold immense potential as a general

promoter of better sleep hygiene as they filter the harsh blue light emitted by electronic devices in the evening.

The glasses are priced from \$39 and can be booked online at <https://blueblockglasses.com/>

## The PropheC AT desiFEST Along With Acts From Around World

TORONTO: The 12th annual desiFEST will feature more than 25 amazing acts from around the world including Canadian singer and songwriter, The PropheC. Known for his distinctive fusion of hip-hop, r&b, and pop with Punjabi lyrics and South Asian themes, The PropheC has performed to sold out crowds across Europe, North America and South Asia.

This year's festival will be Powered By TELUS, with exclusive meet and greet, and fan events planned to give industry and music lovers alike opportunities to network and interact with their favourite artists.

"We are thrilled to welcome a festival favourite, The PropheC,



back this year," says Sathish Bala, desiFEST founder and CEO. "With the support of sponsors like TELUS we're able to bring the best of Canadian and

international talent to Toronto for an event that gets bigger and better every year!"

On June 2, desiFEST will introduce emerging acts and bring popular favourites together for a star-studded line up at Yonge-Dundas Square for 12 hours of FREE fun! Acts from across Canada, India, Pakistan, the U.K., the U.S., West Indies and Sri Lanka will grace the stage, performing in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil, Urdu and more!

desiFEST, a unique celebration of South Asian culture, is put on by a non-profit organization dedicated to further developing the culture and art scene flourishing in South Asian communities in Canada.

## Free Sunscreen Program

TORONTO: Following a successful pilot project last year, the City of Toronto, the David Cornfield Melanoma Fund and the Douglas Wright Foundation have expanded a public health program to provide free sunscreen in select City parks this summer.

The Health Canada-approved SPF 30 broad-spectrum sunscreen will be available at 50 dispensers located in City parks along the waterfront, spanning nearly 50 kilometres from Marie Curtis Park to Rouge Beach.

Crews provided by the melanoma foundations will maintain and stock the dispensers. The two foundations are covering all costs, with the City providing locations and administrative support. Last year's pilot involved placing dispensers in five parks along the downtown waterfront. The pilot won the 2017 Canadian

Dermatology Association Public Education Award.

"Our waterfront parks are well-loved and well-used by Torontonians and visitors alike," said Mayor John Tory. "With the success of the pilot and expansion of this program, it's great to see that so many will be able to enjoy our common grounds with easy access to sun safety."

"Although preventable, skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in Canada," said Danielle Paterson, Executive Director of the David Cornfield Melanoma Fund and a representative for the Douglas Wright Foundation. "Melanoma, the deadliest skin cancer, is one of the fastest rising cancers in Canada. Our sunscreen dispensers will help raise awareness of melanoma and sun safety, while providing sun protection for thousands of Torontonians."

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