

Could drugs for mood disorders, pain and epilepsy cause psychiatric disorders later in life?

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Young animals treated with commonly-prescribed drugs develop behavioral abnormalities in adulthood say researchers at Georgetown University Medical Center. The drugs tested include those used to treat epilepsy, mood disorders and pain.

GUMC neuroscientists and others have previously shown that neurons die after these drugs are administered to immature preclinical animal models. They say the regions of the brain where this drug-induced cell death takes place are important in the regulation of mood, cognition, and movement. In the research presented at the 39th annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, the scientists examined if behavioral function would be affected by the drugs.

Using behavioral tests to detect characteristics of [autism](#) and schizophrenia, the researchers found that when given to infant rats, the drugs caused behavioral abnormalities later in life. What's more, the abnormalities were not limited to the drugs known to cause [neuronal cell death](#).

"That is of particular concern because some of the drugs may predispose to [psychiatric disorders](#) later in life," says lead author Patrick Forcelli, a graduate student in the Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience at GUMC. "At the same time, our studies identify specific drugs that cause little or no long-term behavioral impairment." Forcelli says additional

research will help physicians to better select drugs to treat epilepsy, mood disorders or pain in infants and pregnant women.

Source: Georgetown University Medical Center ([news](#) : [web](#))

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