

Dopamine and hippocampus

3 April 2014

Bruno Giros, PhD, a researcher at the Douglas Mental Health University Institute and a professor in the Department of Psychiatry at McGill University, has demonstrated, for the first time, the role that dopamine plays in a region of the brain called the hippocampus. Published in *Biological Psychiatry*, this discovery opens the door to a better understanding of psychiatric diseases, such as schizophrenia.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that plays a central role in [brain function](#), and many [mental illnesses](#) involve an imbalance in this chemical. What Bruno Giros has shown in particular is that dopamine is present in the hippocampus—the brain area associated with memory and learning—and that it plays a key role in this region.

"Our work helps us better understand some of the symptoms of schizophrenia for which the cause in the brain was unknown, particularly in the area of memory and learning. In a few years, this research could help researchers come up with new therapeutic approaches to improve these symptoms," explained Bruno Giros.

Dr. Giros is the Graham Boeckh Chair in Schizophrenia and the Canada Research Chair in Neurobiology of Mental Disorders. He is one of the world's leading scientists in the study and treatment of [schizophrenia](#). In 1999, he created the Neurobiology and Psychiatry Laboratory at the Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (INSERM) in France. He came to the Douglas Institute in 2008.

Provided by Douglas Mental Health University Institute

APA citation: Dopamine and hippocampus (2014, April 3) retrieved 23 November 2020 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-04-dopamine-hippocampus.html>

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