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Adipokines, neural plasticity, emotion and motivation, mood disorders, PTSD, metabolic disorders

The goal of our research is to understand the molecular and cellular basis of mental disorders, especially for those with comorbid metabolic disturbances. Adipose tissue is now recognized as a highly active metabolic and endocrine organ, secreting adipokines that function as hormones. We are interested in how adipokines affect the structural and function of neurons and the plasticity of neural circuits involved in orchestrating behavioral responses to emotionally, motivationally and metabolically relevant stimuli. We utilize neuron-specific transgenic mouse models, various types of stress and behavioral paradigms, electrophysiology and in vivo neurochemical monitoring to understand the role of adipokines in the pathogenesis of major depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder and further explore their therapeutic potential for the treatment of these psychiatric disorders.
Selected Publications


