



FLOURISH

Understanding and Preventing Mood Disorders

Welcome to our first newsletter!

First and foremost, we want to thank you for your involvement in our research aimed at understanding the early natural history of mood disorders. Without your help over the years, this work would not be possible. We hope this newsletter is a helpful way to inform participants and families about findings and publications that have come out of the study as well as to provide you with resources you may find useful.

As you may know, we have two research sites: Halifax and Ottawa. Our Halifax team includes Dr. Anne Duffy (principal investigator), Sarah Doucette (research associate), Debbie Elliot (research nurse), Ute Lewitzka (research psychiatrist), and Brittany Orchard (research assistant). Our Ottawa team consists of Dr. Paul Grof (co-investigator), Shannon McCloskey (research coordinator), Aggi Hutton (research assistant), and Amanda Helleman (research assistant).

By studying individuals at risk for bipolar disorder we have been able to characterize the early natural development of this illness. Further, we have been able to identify potential risk factors. For example, findings from a recent analysis submitted for publication in the American Journal of Psychiatry suggest that substance use, particularly marijuana and alcohol, significantly increases the chance of developing mood disorders in individuals already at risk.



LINKS AND RESOURCES

Electronically accessible information you may find helpful:

- [Guide to Understanding Adolescent Bipolar Disorder](#)
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: www.dbsalliance.org
- Mood Disorders Society of Canada: www.mooddisorderscanada.ca
- Laing House: www.lainghouse.org
- The Organization for Bipolar Affective Disorder: www.obad.ca
- Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatment: www.canmat.org

Did you know?

Click on the link below to find a list of successful individuals who live or have lived with mood disorders

[Life with Mood Disorders](#)

RESEARCH RESULTS

What Has Been Happening

This research has been funded over the past 10 years by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). We are very excited to tell you that findings from the High Risk study have been gaining international recognition. As a result of growing interest in this work, Dr. Duffy has been invited to present at the following conferences:

- The International Review of Bipolar Disorders. European Bipolar Forum.
- World Congress of Biological Psychiatry
- World Congress of Psychiatric Genetics
- Mood Disorders Conference
- AACAP/CACAP (American/Canadian Academies of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry) Joint Annual Meeting

As well, results from the research have been published in national and international journals including the Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, the Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Journal of Psychiatry, and the British Journal of Psychiatry. You can read all of these publications on our website at www.mdco.ca

FITNESS INITIATIVE

Why it matters: You may have noticed that we like to ask about physical activity! This is because vigorous exercise is known to be extremely effective in regulating and reducing mood difficulties, among numerous other benefits. We know it is important to incorporate regular cardiovascular activities into daily life and to keep motivated, we decided to run as a team in the Ottawa Race Weekend this past May. It was a great time and we've kept up the running since.

WE WANT TO KNOW!

Do you have any comments, questions or suggestions? Is there anything you would like to see in future newsletters? We invite and welcome your feedback ☺ Please direct your responses to newsletter editor-in-chief Shannon McCloskey. Thanks for reading!



Starting the race!



Shannon, Ute, Sarah, and Anne

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