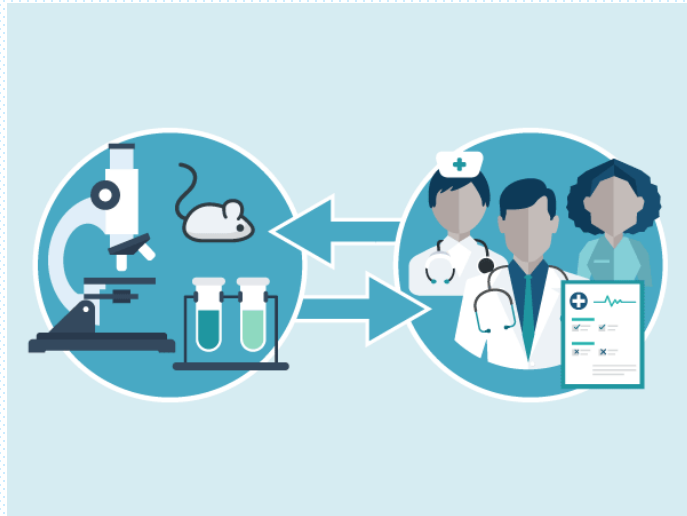




THE INFLAMMATION HYPOTHESIS OF MAJOR DEPRESSION: THIRTY YEARS OF PROGRESS FROM THE BENCH TO CLINIC



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JIPMER, Puducherry



Overview of presentation



- ❖ Brief historical overview
- ❖ Evidence base for inflammation in depression
- ❖ Mechanistic pathways explaining the association
- ❖ Translational implications
- ❖ Evidence for anti-inflammatory treatments in MDD
- ❖ An integrated approach to practice



Introduction

Late 19th century
Sir William Osler
Progressive
Septicemia –
marked mental
prostration and
apathy

1970's-80's
Robert Ader –
Psychoneuroim-
munology
Benjamin Hart -
Sickness Behavior

2014
Immunopsychiatry
Bullmore & Lynall
(Biol Psychiatry)

Novel treatments
targeting immune
systems can be
used to manage
psychiatric
disorders

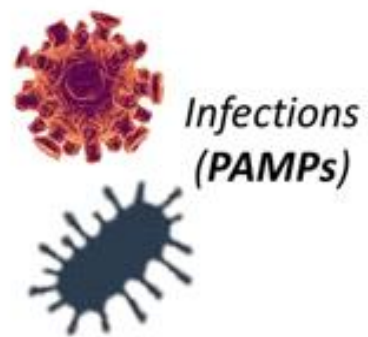
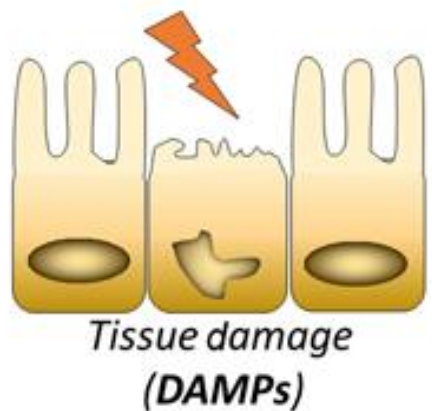


Introduction

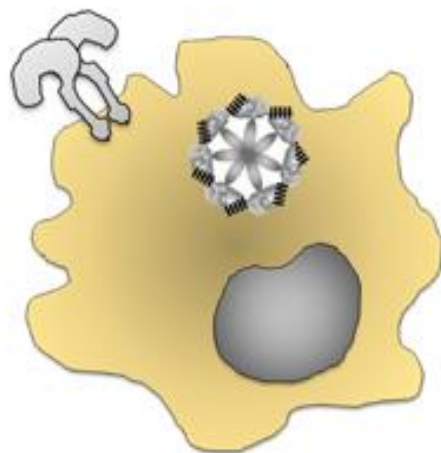
- ❖ Functions - Brain development, neuronal integrity, neurogenesis, and synaptic remodelling
- ❖ Evidence for a contributory role in pathobiology of major mental illness

(Felger and Lotrich., 2013)

INDUCERS

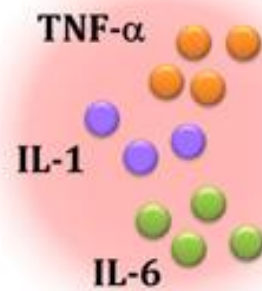


SENSORS

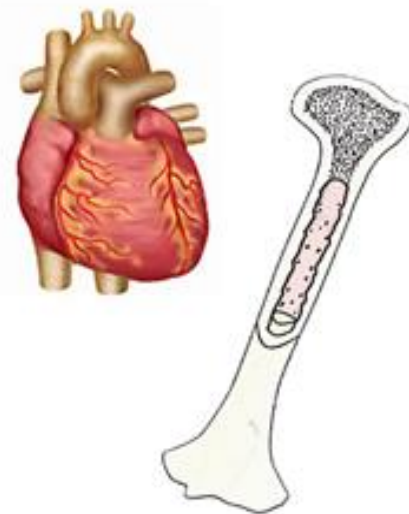


Membrane and intracellular sensing receptors

MEDIATORS



TARGET TISSUES

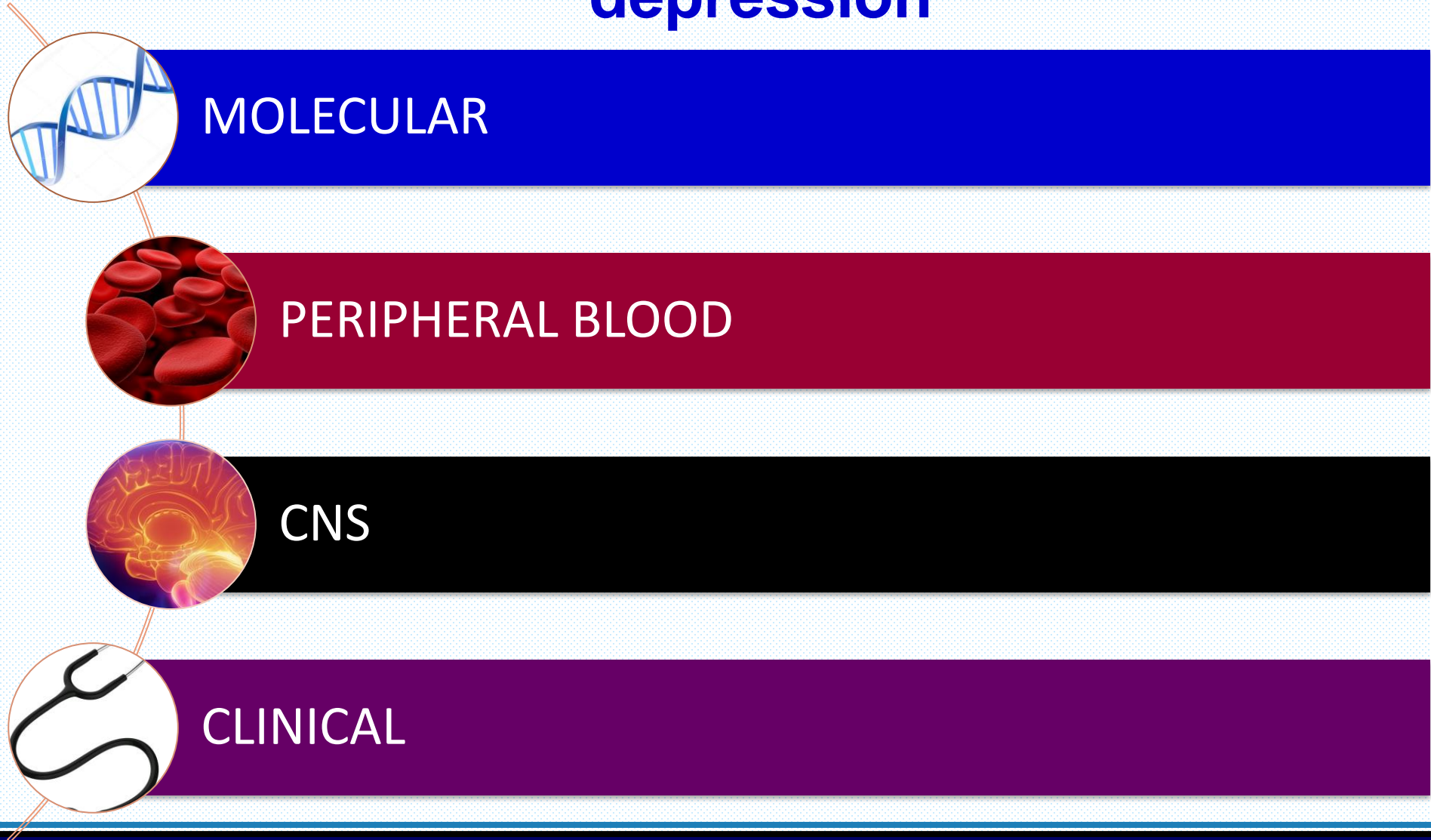




Evidence base for immuno-inflammation in major depression



Levels of Evidence for immuno-inflammation in depression





Evidence for immuno-inflammation in depression

Level of evidence	Research findings
Molecular	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ↑ expression and polymorphisms of immune-related genes (IL-1, TNFalpha, and CRP)• ↑ activation of intracellular pathways (MAPK and NF-kB)• ↑ activated sensors (TLRs and inflammasome)• ↑ telomere length



Evidence for immuno- inflammation in depression

Level of evidence	Research findings
Peripheral blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ↑ proinflammatory cytokines• ↑ endothelial cell activation markers• ↑ adipokines• ↑ acute phase proteins (e.g., CRP)• ↑ oxidative stress markers



Evidence for immuno-inflammation in depression

Level of evidence	Research findings
CNS	



Evidence for immuno-inflammation in depression

Level of evidence	Research findings
Clinical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ↑ prevalence of autoimmune diseases• ↑ prevalence of diseases with a proinflammatory status• ‘Depressogenic’ effects of immunotherapy with cytokines such as interferon alpha



Evidence for inflammation in depression

A Meta-Analysis of Cytokines in Major Depression

Yekta Dowlati, Nathan Herrmann, Walter Swardfager, Helena Liu, Lauren Sham, Elyse K. Reim, and Krista L. Lanctôt

BIOL PSYCHIATRY 2010;67:446–457
© 2010 Society of Biological Psychiatry

24 studies (pooled N > 1200)

8 cytokines analysed

TNF α (WMD – 3.97pg/ml) and IL-6 (WMD – 1.78pg/ml) higher in MDD subjects vs controls

Is Depression an Inflammatory Disease? Findings from a Cross-sectional Study at a Tertiary Care Center

Indian J Psychol Med 2016;38:114-9.

Avin Muthuramalingam, Vikas Menon, Ravi Philip Rajkumar, Vir Singh Negi¹

Significantly raised levels of TNF α and IL-6 but not TGF β



Evidence for inflammation in depression

Original Investigation

Association of Serum Interleukin 6 and C-Reactive Protein in Childhood With Depression and Psychosis in Young Adult Life A Population-Based Longitudinal Study

Golam M. Khandaker, PhD; Rebecca M. Pearson, PhD; Stanley Zammit, PhD; Glyn Lewis, PhD; Peter B. Jones, PhD

JAMA Psychiatry. 2014;71(10):1121-1128. doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2014.1332

Measured serum IL-6 at 9 years

Assessed subjects for depression at 18 years (n=4500)

After adjusting for confounders, those with raised IL-6 at 9 years more likely to be depressed at 18y (OR – 1.6, 95% CI – 1.1-2.1)



Evidence for inflammation in depression

Inflammatory markers in depression: A meta-analysis of mean differences and variability in 5,166 patients and 5,083 controls

Emanuele F. Osimo^{a,b,c,1}, Toby Pillinger^{a,d,1}, Irene Mateos Rodriguez^{e,1}, Golam M. Khandaker^{b,c}, Carmine M. Pariante^{d,f,g}, Oliver D. Howes^{a,d}

Brain, Behavior, and Immunity 87 (2020) 901–909

107 studies and 106 immune

Levels of CRP, IL-6, IL-8, TNF α

Findings persisted

higher in cases vs controls

More severe, chronic, treatment resistant depression associated with dysregulated inflammation

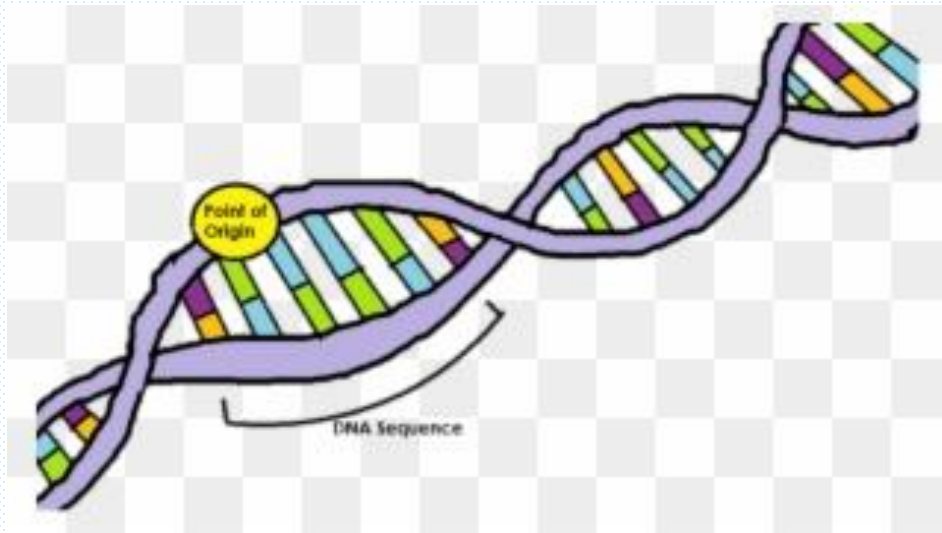
per

Inflammatory profiles of severe treatment-resistant depression

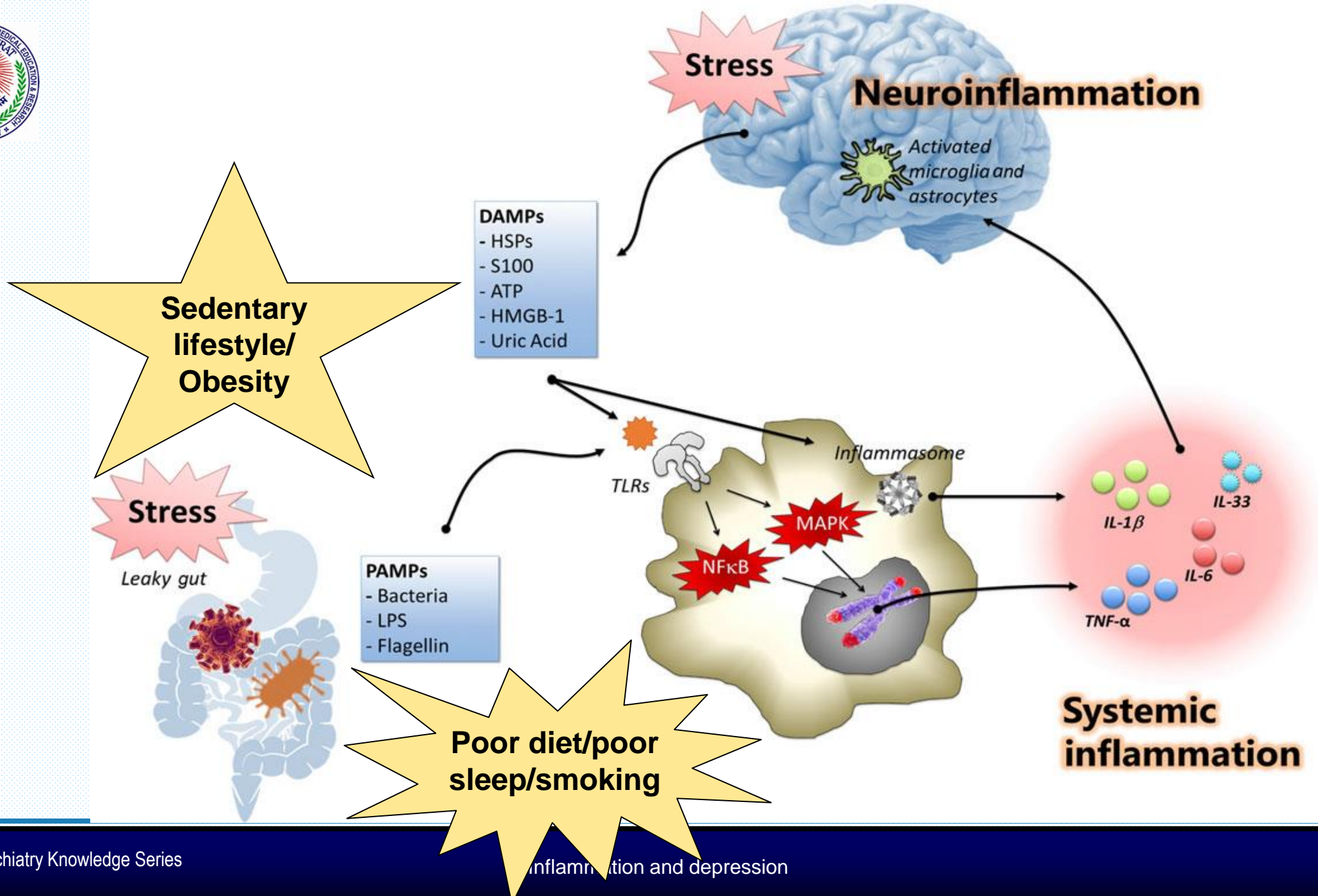
Strawbridge^{a,*}, John Hodsoll^b, Timothy R. Powell^c, Matthew Hotopf^{a,d}, Ghani L. Hatch^a, Gerome Breen^c, Anthony J. Cleare^{a,d}

Journal of Affective Disorders 246 (2019) 42–51

↑IL-6, IL-8, TNF α , CRP associated with poor treatment response
Some proteins increased during treatment
Potential to develop predictors of response for personalized care

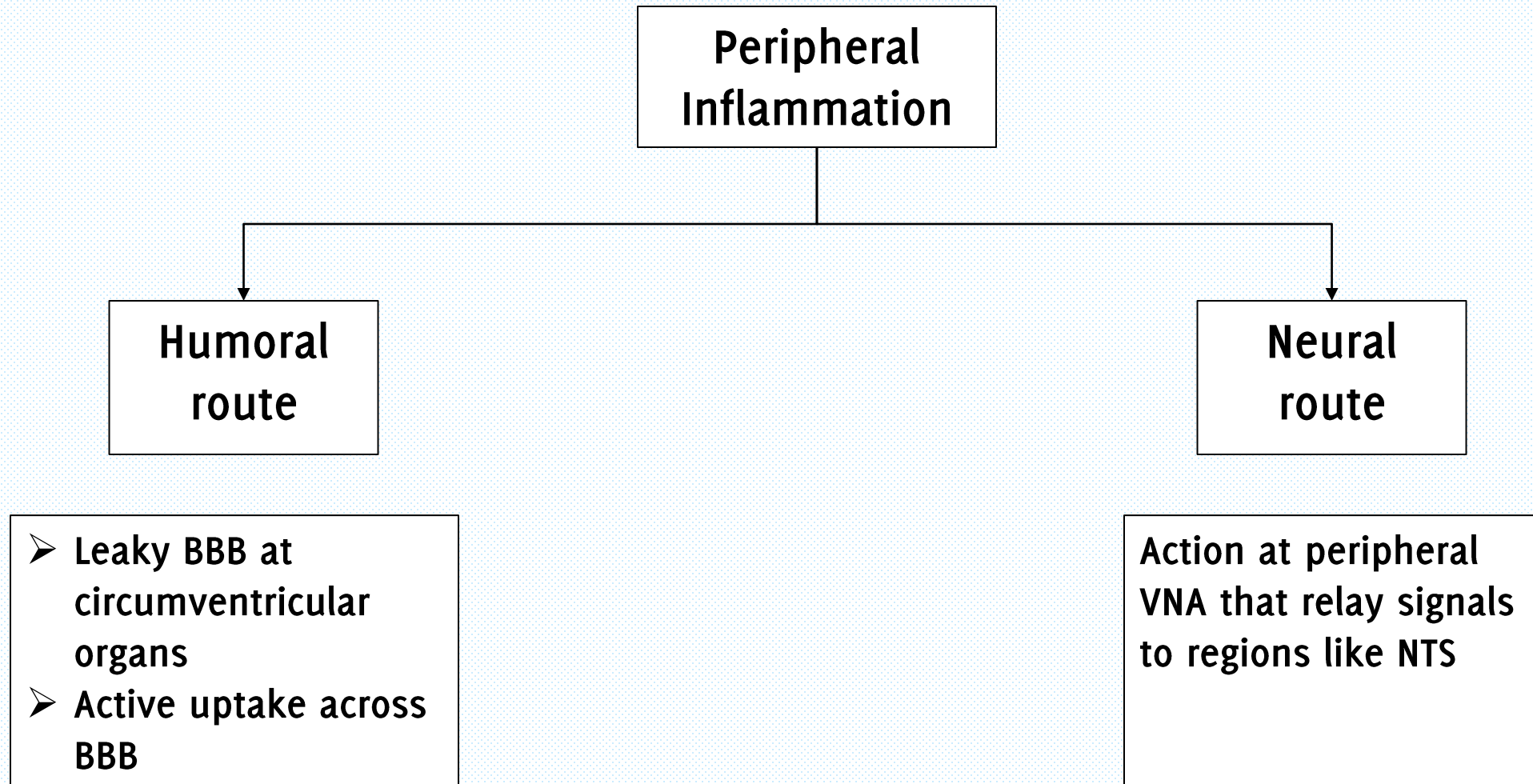


Sources of inflammation in medically healthy individuals



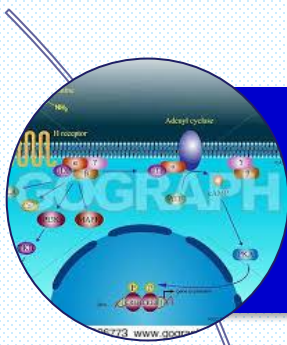


Access to brain and activation of inflammatory networks

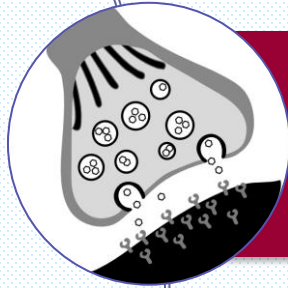




Mechanistic pathways linking inflammation and mental illness



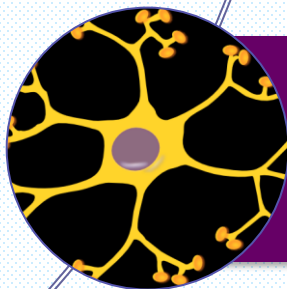
Activation of IDO pathway



Alters metabolism, production and transport of neurotransmitters



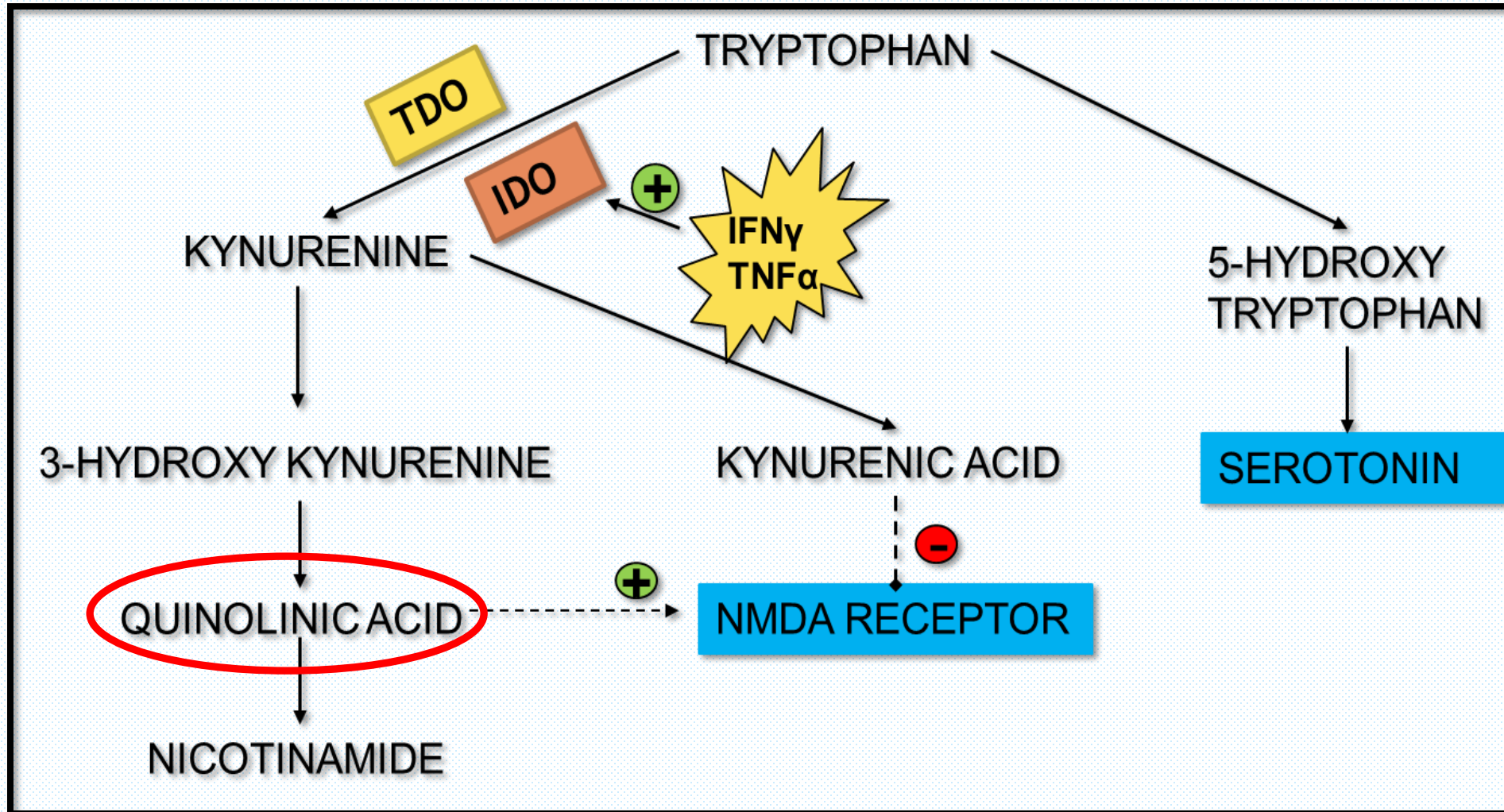
Effects on HPA Axis



Effects on neurotrophic/growth factors

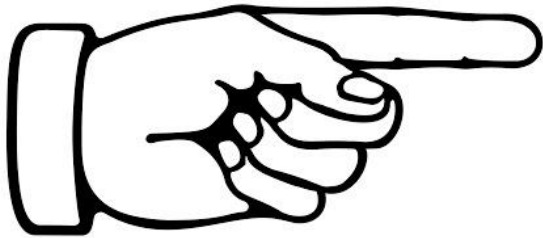


Effect of inflammation on IDO pathway





Effect of inflammation on serotonin

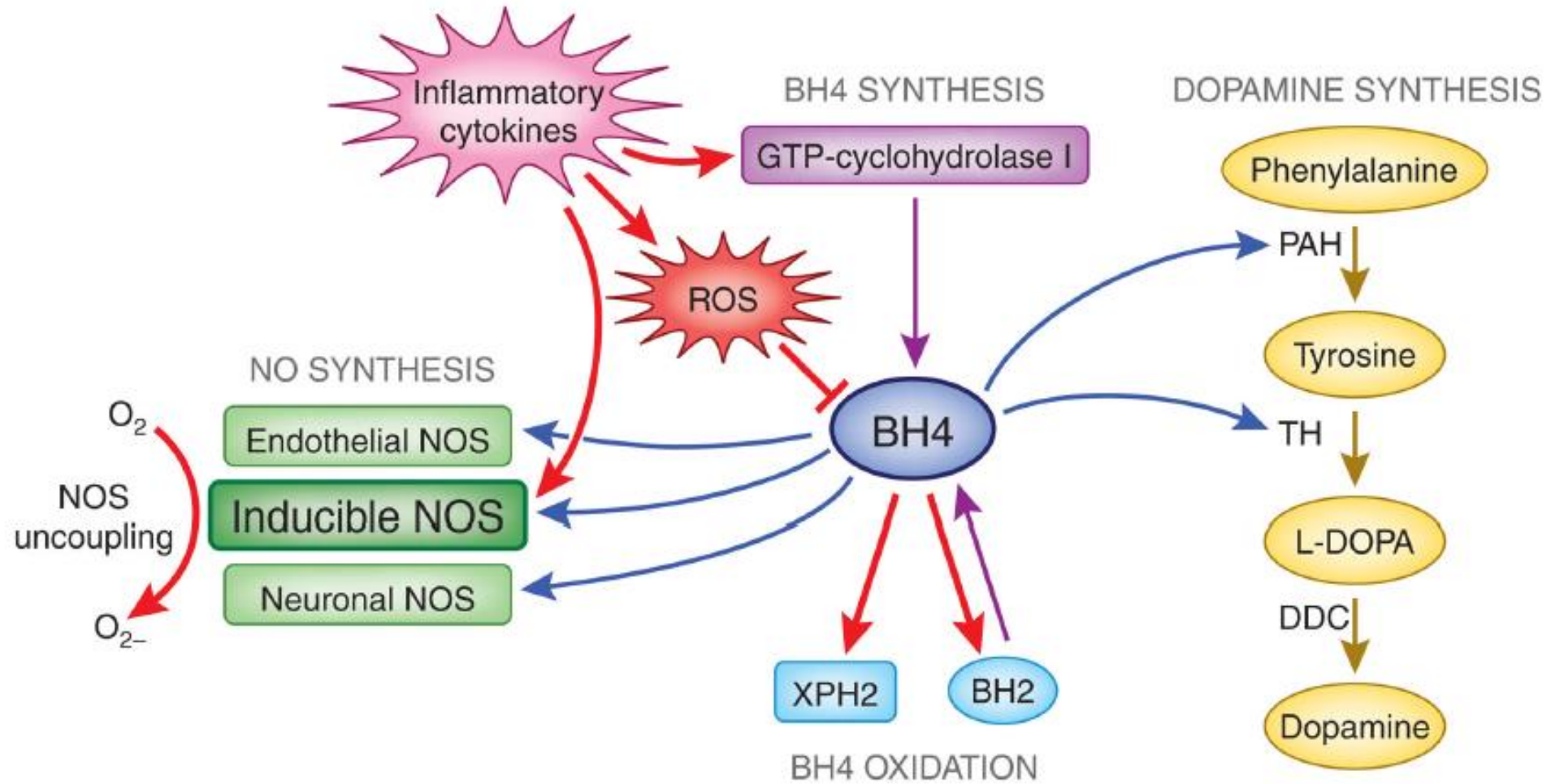


- ❖ Increase expression and activity of neuronal 5HTT
- ❖ Induction of p38 mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK), both in vitro and in vivo
- ❖ Interact with genetic vulnerability - influence 5-HT levels

(Zhu et al., 2005)



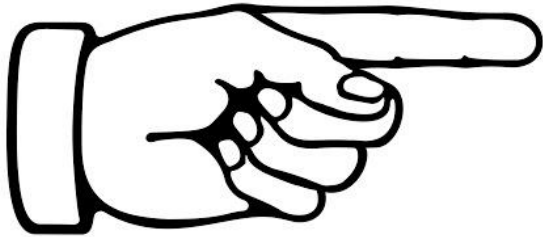
Effect on dopamine - synthesis



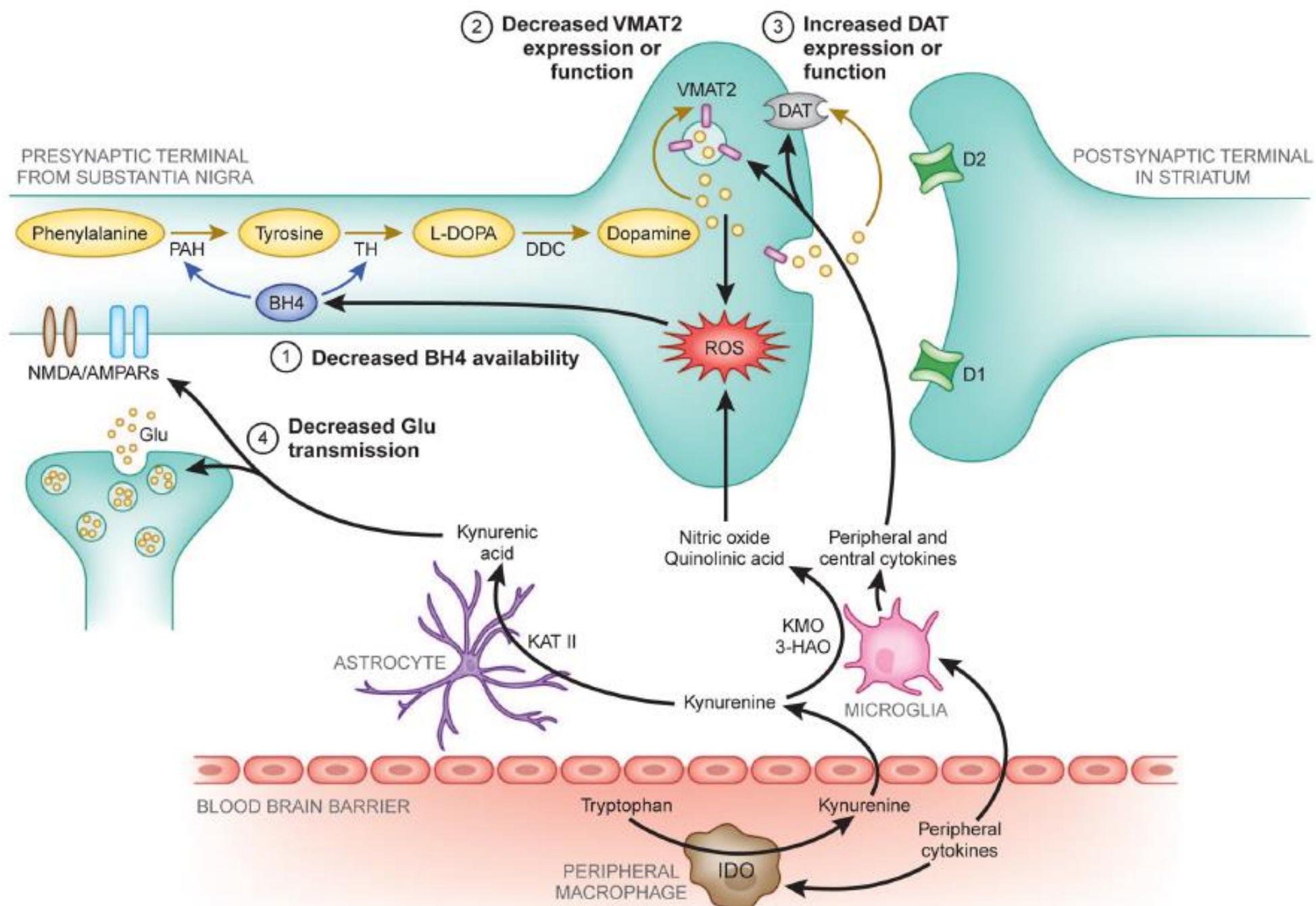
Felger JC & Miller AH. Front. Neuroendocrinol 2012



Effect on dopamine - packaging/reuptake



- ❖ Negatively affect the expression and function of VMAT2
- ❖ Preclinical evidence for ↑DAT function and expression
- ❖ ↑KA - reduces Glu transmission and ↓Glu-evoked DA release



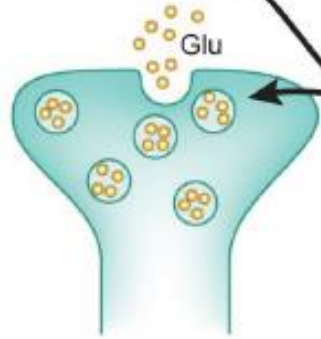
PRESYNAPTIC TERMINAL FROM SUBSTANTIA NIGRA

Phenylalanine → PAH → Tyrosine → TH → L-DOPA → DDC → Dopamine

NMDA/AMPARs

1 Decreased BH4 availability

4 Decreased Glu transmission



Kynurenic acid

ASTROCYTE

KAT II

Kynurenine

KMO

3-HAO

MICROGLIA

BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER

Tryptophan

Kynurenine

PERIPHERAL MACROPHAGE

IDO

Peripheral cytokines

2 Decreased VMAT2 expression or function

3 Increased DAT expression or function

VMAT2

DAT

POSTSYNAPTIC TERMINAL IN STRIATUM

D2

D1

ROS

Nitric oxide

Quinolinic acid

Peripheral and central cytokines

KMO

3-HAO

MICROGLIA

BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER

Tryptophan

Kynurenine

PERIPHERAL MACROPHAGE

IDO

Peripheral cytokines

2 Decreased VMAT2 expression or function

3 Increased DAT expression or function

VMAT2

DAT

POSTSYNAPTIC TERMINAL IN STRIATUM

D2

D1

ROS

Nitric oxide

Quinolinic acid

Peripheral and central cytokines

KMO

3-HAO

MICROGLIA

BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER

Tryptophan

Kynurenine

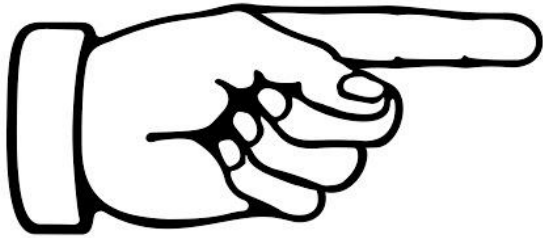
PERIPHERAL MACROPHAGE

IDO

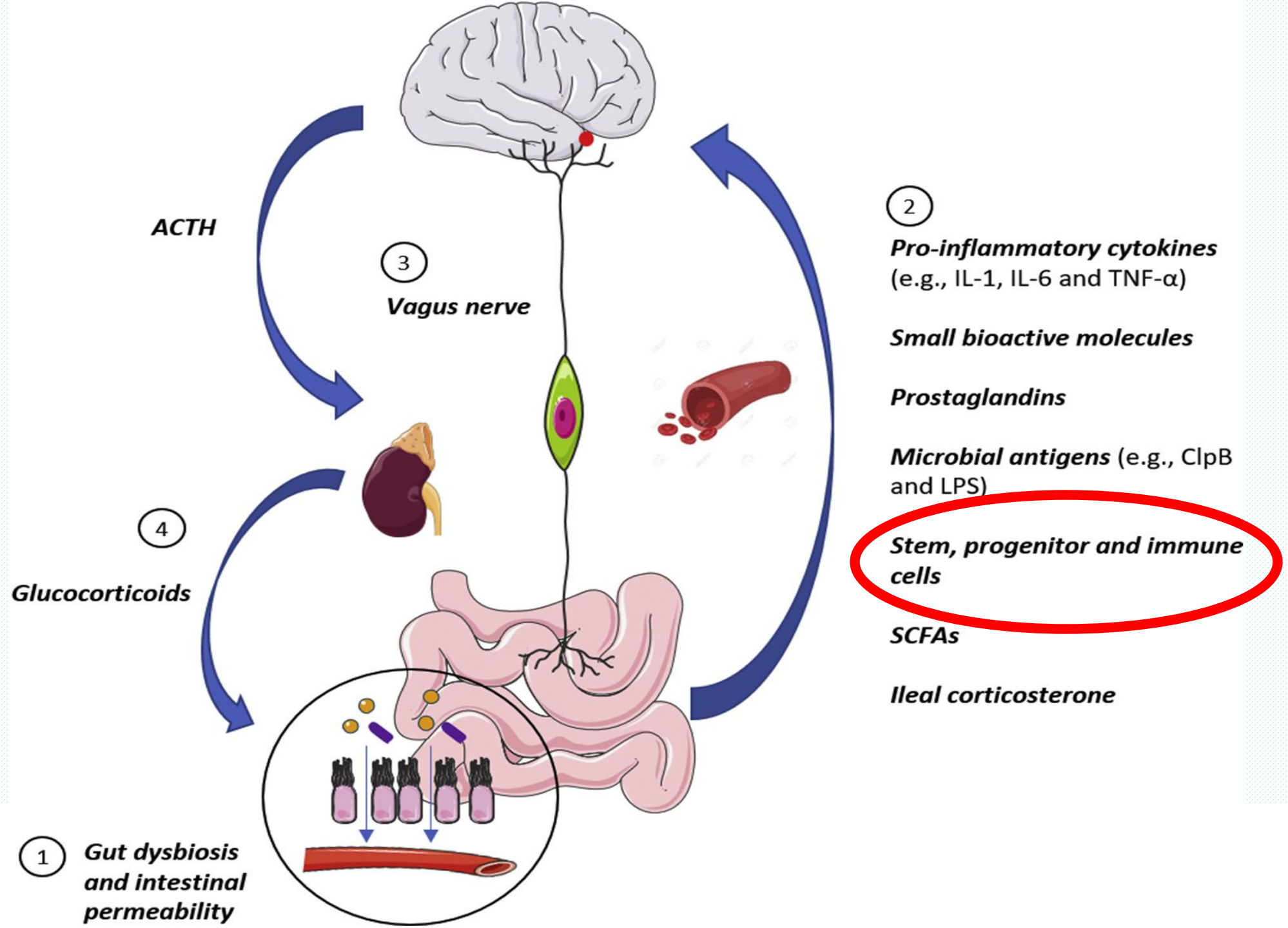
Peripheral cytokines



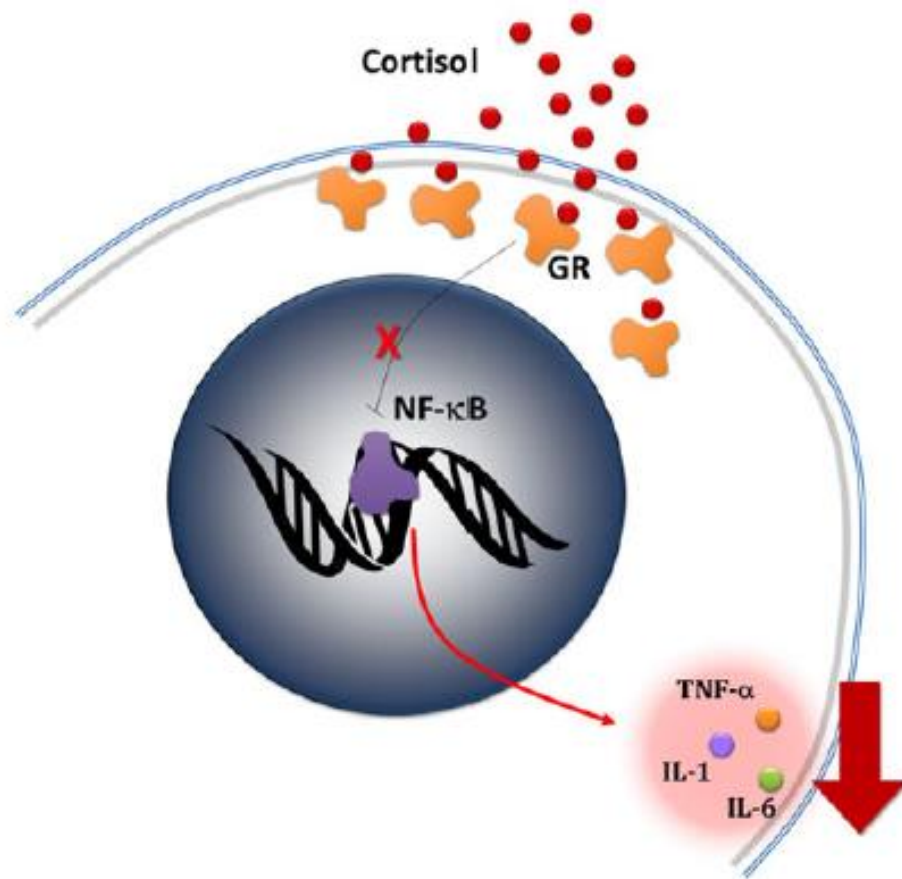
Effect on glutamate



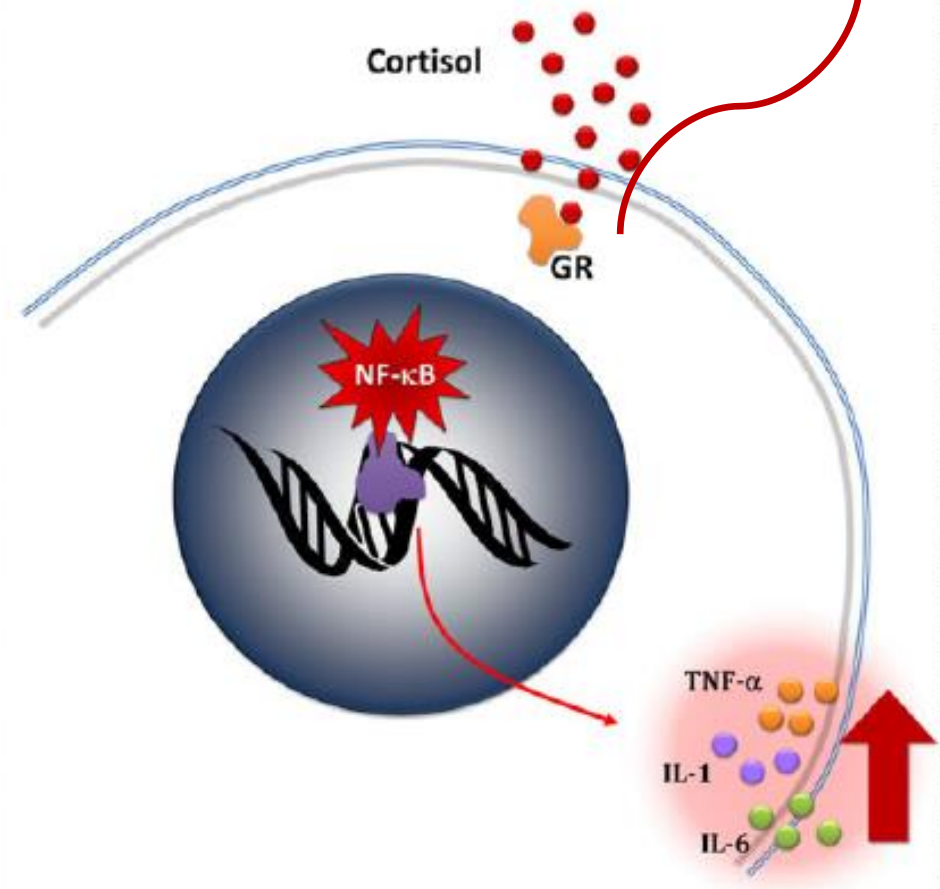
- ❖ QUIN - directly activate NMDA receptor to induce release of Glu
- ❖ ↓ astrocytic expression of Glu transporters / ↑ release of Glutamate
- ❖ Extrasynaptic NMDA receptors - ↓ production of BDNF



A During **ACUTE STRESS**, enhanced GR sensitivity leads to better control of inflammation.



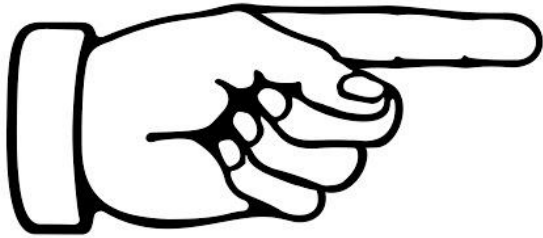
B During **CHRONIC STRESS**, steroid resistance occurs, leading to increased inflammation.



↓inhibitory feedback on production of CRH/ACTH

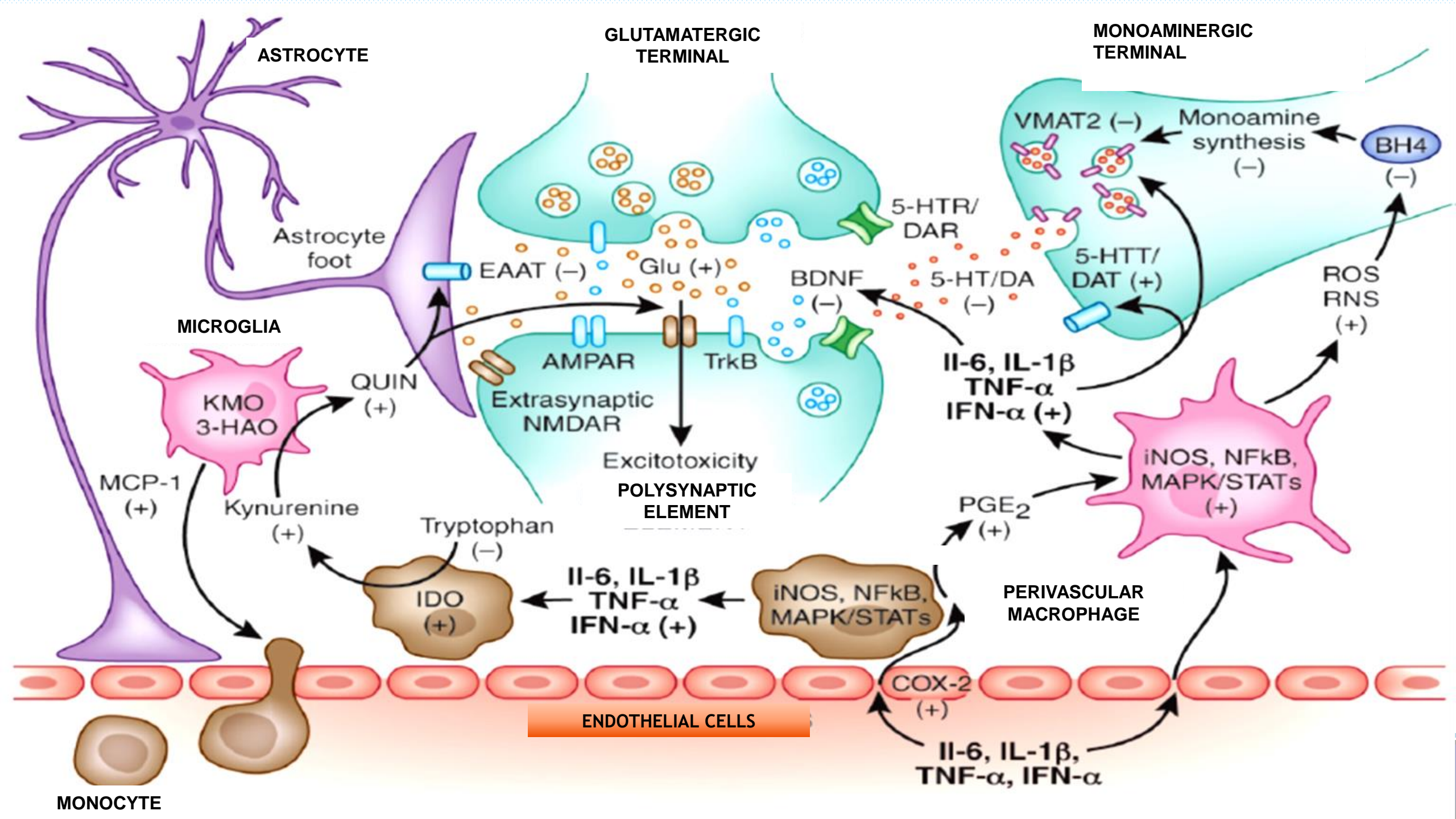


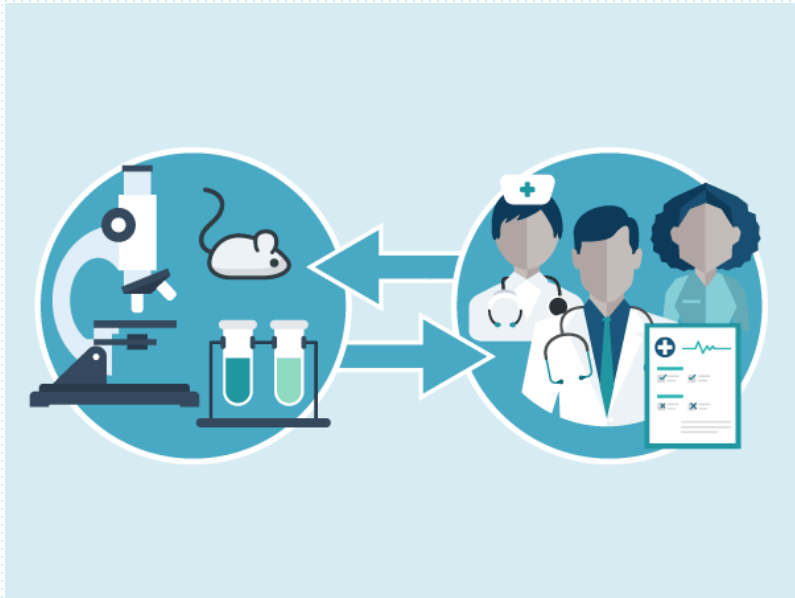
Effects on neuropeptides and growth factors



- ❖ ↑ glucocorticoid exposure - decline in BDNF expression in hippocampal and cortical regions
- ❖ Influence BDNF receptor (TrkB) phosphorylation, thereby further interfering with BDNF signaling

(Anacker et al., 2013; Cortese et al., 2011)





Translational implications



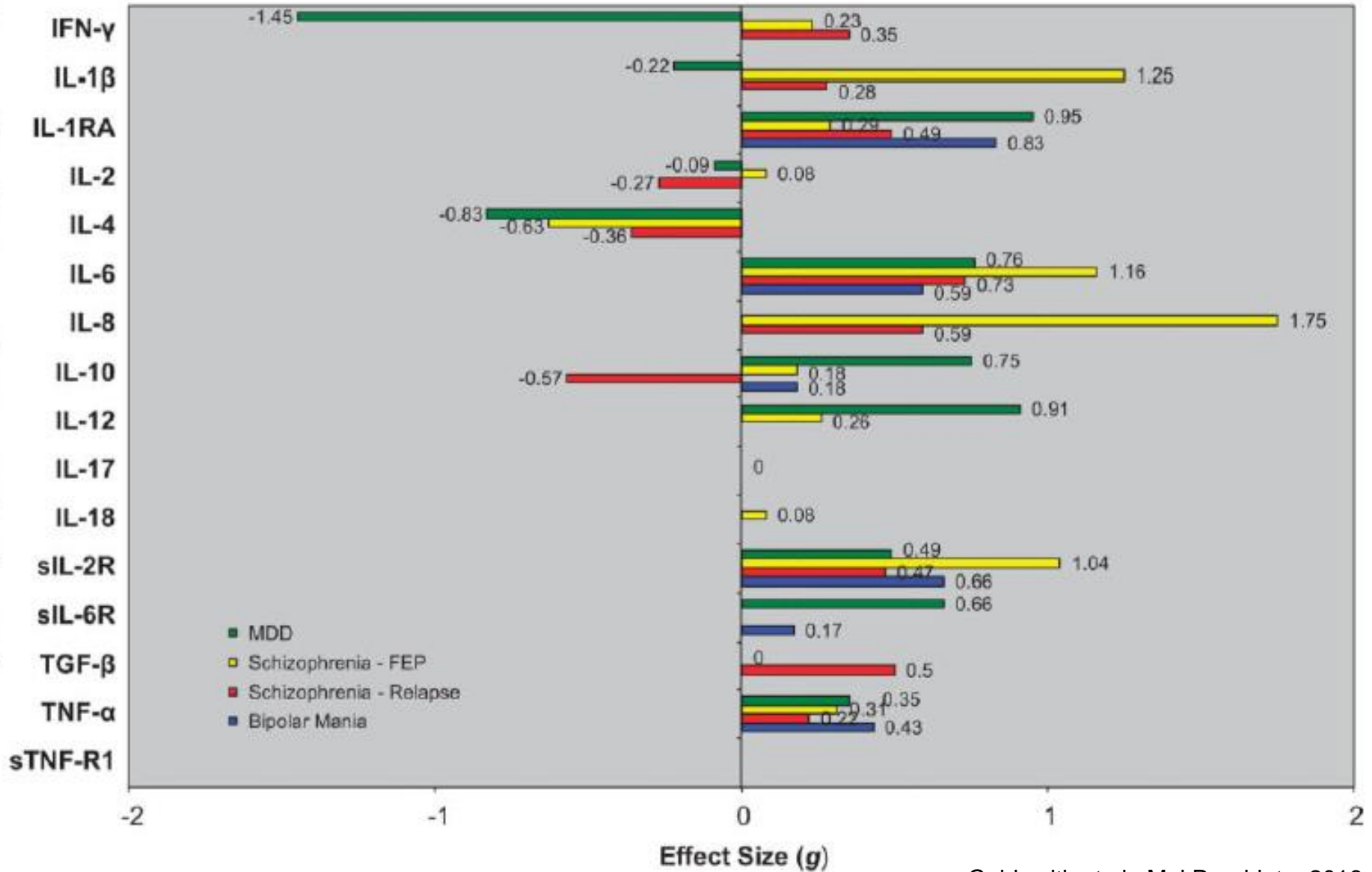
Translational implications

Research finding	Translational implications
↑ Levels of inflammatory markers in TRD	Can potentially identify treatment resistant sub-group
Some markers decrease with AD treatment whereas others do not	Can be used as markers of treatment prognosis
Machine learning algorithm approaches using longitudinal EMR data - predictive relationship between ↑ inflammation and lifetime MDD	Specific inflammatory markers may predict first MDD onset
Interferon- γ -induced protein 10 predicted dysthymic disorder (Dysthymia > Depression > Controls)	MDD spectrum conditions may have specific immune signatures



a

Cytokine (or Cytokine Receptor or Antagonist)



Goldsmith et al., Mol Psychiatry 2016



Translational implications

Research finding	Translational implications
Higher CRP levels were associated with a better response to nortriptyline > escitalopram	Inflammatory biomarkers may be used to guide treatment response
Infliximab alleviated dep. symptoms in TRD compared to placebo - only in those with hsCRP >5 mg/L	Trials of anti-inflammatory agents need to enrich themselves for inflammatory sub-type of patients
Effect sizes for statistically significant findings/differences were small	Not clinically significant or immune disequilibrium occurs in a minority



Anti-inflammatory treatments for depression



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments for mental illness

- ❖ Why do we need new treatments for mental illness?
 - High rates of treatment resistance across disorders
 - Our relatively limited psychopharmacologic repertoire


First



Do No Harm

RESEARCH PAPER

Efficacy and safety of anti-inflammatory agents for the treatment of major depressive disorder: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials

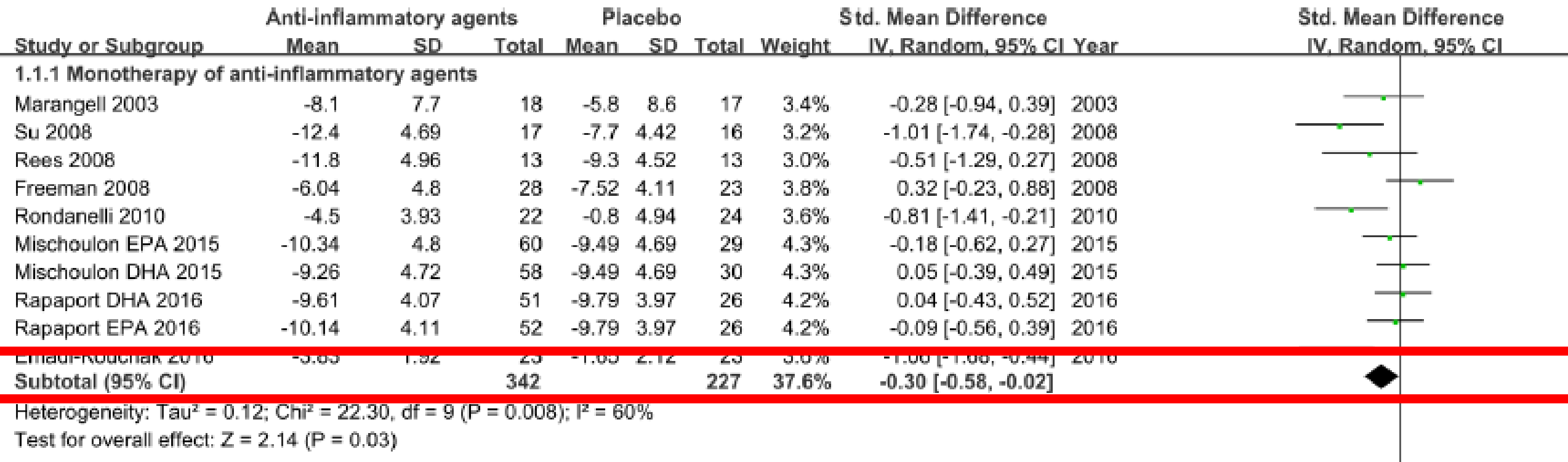
Shuang Bai,¹ Wenliang Guo,² Yangyang Feng,¹ Hong Deng,¹ Gaigai Li,¹ Hao Nie,¹ Guangyu Guo,¹ Haihan Yu,¹ Yang Ma,¹ Jiahui Wang,¹ Shiling Chen,¹ Jie Jing,¹ Jingfei Yang,¹ Yingxin Tang,¹ Zhouping Tang ¹

Bai S, et al. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 2019;**0**:1–12. doi:10.1136/jnnp-2019-320912

Pooled analysis of 26 RCTs - >1600 participants
NSAIDs/Omega-3FA/Statins/Minocycline/Modafanil/NAC



Evidence for monotherapy in depression

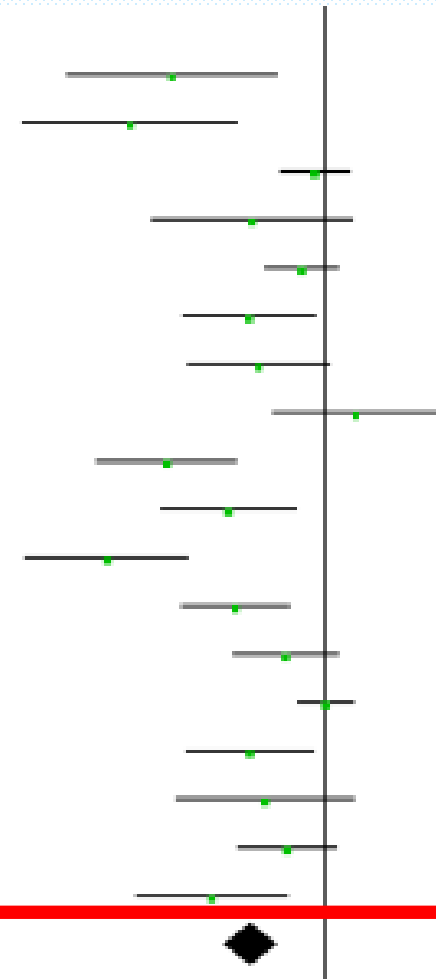




Evidence for adjunctive anti-inflammatory treatments in depression

1.1.2 Adjunctive anti-inflammatory agents

Nemets 2002	-12.4	6.72	10	-1.6	7.35	10	2.3%	-1.47 [-2.48, -0.46]	2002
Su 2003	-13.6	3.8	12	-6.4	3.6	10	2.2%	-1.87 [-2.90, -0.83]	2003
DeBattista 2003	-6.1	4.62	68	-5.57	5.73	67	4.7%	-0.10 [-0.44, 0.24]	2003
Müller 2006	-17.5	6.17	10	-12.5	7.4	8	2.4%	-0.71 [-1.67, 0.26]	2006
Carney 2009	-11.5	6.1	62	-10.1	6.06	60	4.7%	-0.23 [-0.58, 0.13]	2009
Akhondzadeh 2009	-13.2	4.26	20	-10.2	3.77	20	3.5%	-0.73 [-1.37, -0.09]	2009
Mischoulon 2009	-7.7	7.9	16	-3	6.5	19	3.3%	-0.64 [-1.32, 0.04]	2009
Bot 2010	-12.3	8.91	12	-14.8	7.63	12	2.9%	0.29 [-0.51, 1.10]	2010
Abolfazli 2011	-14.04	2.49	22	-10.04	2.69	22	3.4%	-1.52 [-2.19, -0.84]	2011
Abbasi 2012	-13.4	3.88	20	-10.05	3.15	20	3.4%	-0.93 [-1.58, -0.27]	2012
Sepanjnia 2012	-16.7	1.55	20	-13.4	1.55	20	3.0%	-2.09 [-2.87, -1.30]	2012
Ghanizadeh 2013	-12.84	6.36	31	-8.2	4.02	31	4.0%	-0.86 [-1.38, -0.34]	2013
Haghighi 2014	-13.7	3.65	30	-12.27	3.69	30	4.0%	-0.38 [-0.90, 0.13]	2014
Berk 2014	-5.8	7.96	108	-5.8	8.31	99	5.0%	0.00 [-0.27, 0.27]	2014
Gougol 2015	-18.5	7.1	22	-13.68	5.89	22	3.6%	-0.73 [-1.34, -0.11]	2015
Majd 2015	-18.3	3.4	14	-15.8	5.2	9	2.7%	-0.58 [-1.43, 0.28]	2015
Dean 2017	-15.2	9.21	36	-11.9	8.53	35	4.2%	-0.37 [-0.84, 0.10]	2017
Hussain 2017	-18.2	16.1	16	-9.2	16.1	16	3.2%	-1.99 [-1.92, -0.26]	2017
Subtotal (95% CI)			529			512	62.4%	-0.70 [-0.97, -0.43]	



Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0.23$; $Chi^2 = 66.25$, $df = 17$ ($P < 0.00001$); $I^2 = 74\%$

Test for overall effect: $Z = 5.12$ ($P < 0.00001$)



Evidence - anti-inflammatory therapies in depression

- ❖ Sub-group analysis - NSAIDs/Minocycline/Statins and Omega-3 FA - significant anti-depressant effects
- ❖ Gastrointestinal AE's - different between groups - only for statins/NAC





Evidence - anti-inflammatory therapies in depression

Systematic Review / Meta-analysis

Efficacy of anti-inflammatory treatment on major depressive disorder or depressive symptoms: meta-analysis of clinical trials

Acta Psychiatr Scand 2019; 139: 404–419
All rights reserved
DOI: 10.1111/acps.13016

36 RCTs (N ~ 9000)

NSAIDs(n=13)/**Cytokine**

inhibitors(n=9)/**Statins**(n=7)/**Minocycline**(n=3)/Pioglitazone(n=2)/**Glucocorticoids** (n=2)

Pooled effects as monotherapy – SMD = 0.41

Pooled effects as add-on – SMD = 0.64

No increased risk for GI or CVS events

Non-significant increased risk of infections



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Celecoxib and other NSAIDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be useful as a monotherapy• Or in combination with antidepressant medication	Patients with higher initial inflammation experienced greater benefit from celecoxib than those with lower inflammation



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Cytokine inhibitors (e.g., infliximab)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced depressive symptoms in people with psoriasis• Lessened fatigue during cancer treatment• Resolved MDD in Crohn's disease	Patients with high baseline CRP levels had substantially greater reductions in depressive symptoms than those with low CRP levels



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Prebiotics and probiotics	2 Meta-analysis 10 trials (n=1349) Probiotics – NS – (d = -0.13) 34 trials Prebiotics – NS (d = -0.08) Probiotics – Sig (d = -0.24)	Larger ES noted for clinical/medical samples (d=-0.45, p<0.001)

Liu et al., Neurosci Behav Rev 2019; Ng et al., J Affect Dis 2018



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Healthy diets (e.g., Mediterranean diet)	Review of 6 RCT's - 3 found fewer recurrences of depression - 2 found higher BDNF levels (MeDi + nuts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Few side effects• Wide variability in dietary components• Applicability to Indian culture• Disadv – motivation

Altun et al., Neurol Psy Brain Res 2019



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 23 RCT's (n=977)<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Vs no intervention (g=1.24)➤ Vs psychotherapy (g=0.22)➤ Vs anti-deps (g=0.08)➤ As adjunct to anti-deps (g=0.50)	<p>Best used as an adjunct to anti-deps (g=0.50, sig trend)</p> <p>Advantages vs Disadvantages</p> <p>Kvam et al., J Affect Disord 2016</p>



Potential anti-inflammatory treatments

Intervention	Evidence	Comments
Integrative medicine Interventions – yoga/breathing /meditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May modulate stress immune response• Positive ES vs placebo• Comparable ES vs standard interventions• Mixed evidence for add-on to A/D medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited no of RCT's with lot of variability in results• Risk of bias unclear <p>(Cramer et al., J Affect Disord 2017)</p>



Potential new therapeutic targets

- ❖ CBT - Can address multiple behaviors leading to inflammation and have lasting effects

(Su et al., 2014; Gazal et al., 2013)

- ❖ Lopresti AL (ANZJP, 2019)
 - 23 trials
 - 14 studies showed reduction in ≥ 1 marker, \uparrow in 3 studies and no change in 6 studies
 - Poorer treatment response in those with higher pre-morbid inflammation (n=3)



Unanswered questions...

Do changes in cytokine levels parallel treatment response in depression

Do specific depressive symptoms predict better response to treatment?

How long to give anti-inflammatory treatments?

How to identify sub-groups that may optimally benefit from add-on Rx?

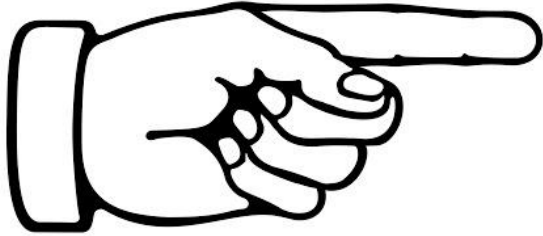




An integrated approach to practice



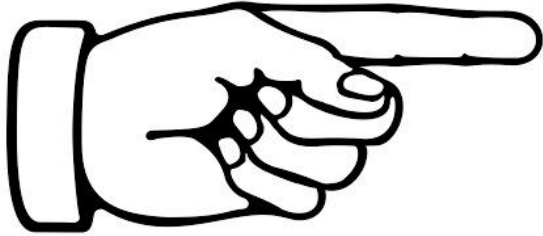
What can clinicians do? - An integrated approach to practice



- ❖ Obtain a detailed history - obesity/sedentary lifestyle/early life adversity/smoking/f/h of immune disorders/gluten sensitivity/IBD
- ❖ Explore symptoms - omega-3 FA/Vit C/Vit E/FA



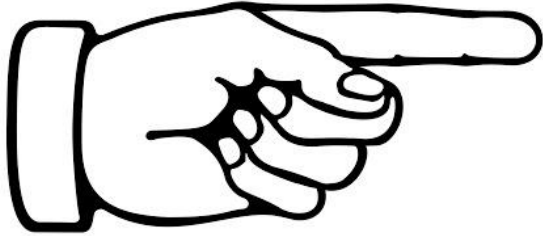
What can clinicians do? - An integrated approach to practice



- ❖ Incorporate these into diagnostic formulation
- ❖ Advice low cost non-pharmacological interventions
- ❖ Manage co-morbid alcohol/smoking



What can clinicians do? - An integrated approach to practice



- ❖ If non-response or inadequate response - CRP
- ❖ Choose from evidence based options
- ❖ Keep abreast of the emerging literature in the field of anti-inflammatory therapeutics



Conclusion

- ❖ Mounting evidence for inflammation in the pathogenesis of depression
- ❖ Mechanistic links include monoamines, glutamate, neuropeptide, HPA axis and growth factors
- ❖ Some promise noted in trials with anti-inflammatory agents but as trials get longer and more robust, efficacy is more modest
- ❖ Field is very exciting - personalized medicine
- ❖ Key question - Inflammation in whom?



Future needs

- ❖ Efficacy and safety of drugs that have less off-target effects
- ❖ Examine the extent of inflammatory change and relate it to changes in depressive symptoms
- ❖ Defining a reliable biomarker signature - at-risk patients that may benefit from immune therapies



References

- ❖ Cortese GP, Barrientos RM, Maier SF, Patterson SL. Aging and a peripheral immune challenge interact to reduce mature brain-derived neurotrophic factor and activation of TrkB, PLCgamma1, and ERK in hippocampal synaptoneurosomes. *Journal of Neuroscience*. 2011; 31:4274-4279
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