

The Neural Mechanisms of Psychedelic Drug Action - Talk 2

Speaker: Dr. Fernanda Palhano-Fontes - Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte

Title: Rapid antidepressant effects of the psychedelic ayahuasca in treatment-resistant depression and its relationship to biomarkers

Venue: Institute of Theoretical Biology, Philippstr. 12, Haus 4, Hörsaal 4, Berlin 10115, Germany
<https://goo.gl/maps/uBEkAEksdoxK89ua6>

Date: Thursday, 01.06.2023

Time: 17:00

Zoom Link (hybrid event): <https://hu-berlin.zoom.us/j/66856745433>

Abstract: The use of ayahuasca, an indigenous brew from the Amazonian basin with psychedelic properties, has increased worldwide and its therapeutic value has been investigated. Recently, we conducted a randomized placebo-controlled trial with ayahuasca in 35 patients with treatment-resistant depression. The results suggest a significant antidepressant effect of ayahuasca with rapid onset, already one day after a single session with ayahuasca. In addition to the antidepressant effects, in this trial we also explored the sub-acute effects of ayahuasca on a number of markers such as psychiatric scales, neuropsychological tests, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), electroencephalography (EEG), and, saliva and blood tests. All assessments occurred one day before and one day after the treatment session with ayahuasca or placebo, in all patients with depression as well as in a group of 50 healthy individuals. This presentation will focus on showing some of the findings from these measurements, which should help informing on safety and on the mechanisms behind the observed antidepressant effects of ayahuasca.

Yours sincerely from the organizing team,

Anna Bronec (anna.bronec@charite.de)

Jiameng Wu (jiameng.wu@gmail.com)

Debapatim Jana (debapatim.jana@bccn-berlin.de)

Eric Lonergan (eric.lonergan@charite.de)

Kasey Devitt (devittkasey@gmail.com)

Prateep Beed

Timo Torsten Schmidt