



HOPE FOR DEPRESSION
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

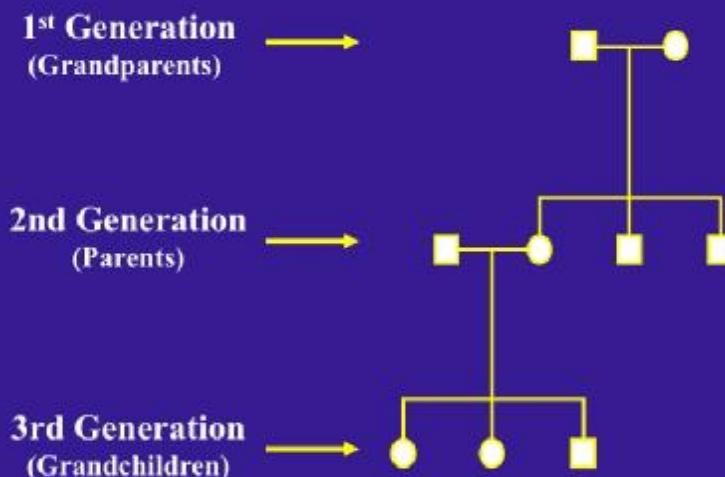
- Lecture: *"Depression is a Family Affair"*
- Event: HDRF Inaugural Seminar & Luncheon
New York - October 22nd, 2008
- Speaker: Myrna Weissman, Ph.D.
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Depression is a Family Affair

Our Current Research

- The children and grandchildren of depressed parents are at high risk for depression and other disorders
- Successful treatment of the depressed parent to remission reduces the stressful environment for the child and the child improves
- We are actively pursuing the genes and neurocircuits involved in risk for depression



Children of Depressed Parents are at High Risk for Depression

- Our 25-year study of 3-generations has added to the observation by showing:
- Transmission across generations
 - Grandparents → Parents → Grandchildren
- Depression is sustained from childhood to adulthood
- Depression recurs, is impairing.
 - The middle generation, the parents, are entering into their 50s and are showing an increase in cardiovascular disease.

- Depression is a complex, genetic disorder. Onset and recurrence is precipitated by stress in vulnerable persons.
- A depressed parent is a stressful event in a genetically vulnerable child.
- Do children benefit from a remission in their parents' depression?
- We designed a study to treat the depressed parent and follow their children.

LEADING COOPERATORS

Remissions in Maternal Depression and Child Psychopathology: A STAR*D-Child Report

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Parental depression is a common but often untreated and well-understood risk factor for child psychopathology. The STAR*D-Child study was designed to evaluate the impact of remission in maternal depression on child psychopathology. The study was designed to evaluate the impact of remission in maternal depression on child psychopathology. The study was designed to evaluate the impact of remission in maternal depression on child psychopathology.

Objective: Children of depressed parents have high rates of anxiety disorders and depression. Children of depressed parents who attain remission, with an ongoing medication management plan, have lower rates of anxiety and depression than children of depressed parents who do not. These children are more likely to be in remission than children of depressed parents who do not. These children are more likely to be in remission than children of depressed parents who do not.

Design: Assessment of children whose depressed mothers were being treated with medication as part of the STAR*D-Child study. Treatment of maternal depression with medication was associated with lower rates of anxiety and depression in children.

Setting and Patients: This study was conducted in the STAR*D-Child study, which was a 25-year study of 3-generations. The study was designed to evaluate the impact of remission in maternal depression on child psychopathology.

Main Results: Children of depressed parents who attain remission, with an ongoing medication management plan, have lower rates of anxiety and depression than children of depressed parents who do not. These children are more likely to be in remission than children of depressed parents who do not.

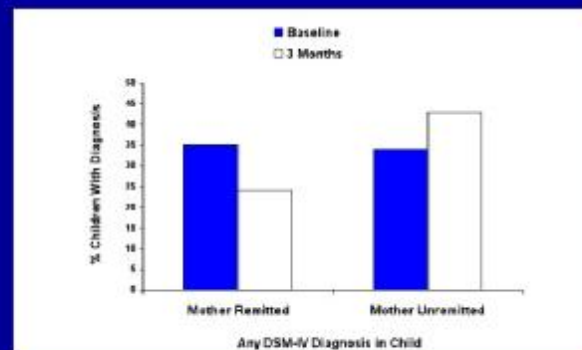
Conclusions: Assessment of maternal depression in children with anxiety and depression. The study was designed to evaluate the impact of remission in maternal depression on child psychopathology.

When depressed parents entered into treatment...

- 1/3 of their children were currently ill with depression, anxiety, and/or conduct disorders
- 1/2 of their children had a history of these psychiatric disorder

After 3-Months of Treatment...

Change in Child Diagnoses by Mother's Remission



17

Of children with a diagnosis when the mother began treatment:

- If mother remitted, **33%** of the children got better
- If mother did not remit, **12%** of the children got better

Of children without a diagnosis when the mother began treatment:

- If the mother remitted, **ALL** children remained well
- If mother did not remit, **17%** of children developed a diagnosis

Clinical Implications

- Vigorous treatment of depressed parents to achieve remission can have a positive effect on their children as well. Failure to treat depressed parents, in contrast, can increase the burden of illness in their children.
- These findings suggest– treat the parent and the child.
- The parents' remission leads to increased attention and involvement with the child and may reverse the long-standing symptoms in children who are likely to be genetically vulnerable.

Understanding Genetics

- Multi-center national genetic study of recurrent early onset depression is ongoing
- 1,300 sib-pairs collected. 2,000 sib-pairs the goal
- Samples are deidentified and go into a national repository for use by scientists all over the world.

Understanding Brain Circuits in Collaboration with Bradley Peterson, M.D.

- 214 functional and structural MRI have been completed.

Conclusions

- Depression and its treatment is a family affair
- Depression runs in families over the generations
- Successful treatment of a parent can break the cycle of depression
- This treatment can be medication and/or psychotherapy
- Modern genetics and neurobiology are unraveling the causes
- Modifying the immediate environment plays an important role