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# AI-POWERED IN VIVO SCREENS FOR NEUROACTIVE DRUG DISCOVERY USING ZEBRAFISH (DANIO RERIO)

RAS Professor Allan V. Kalueff, PhD



Научно-исследовательский институт  
нейронаук и медицины

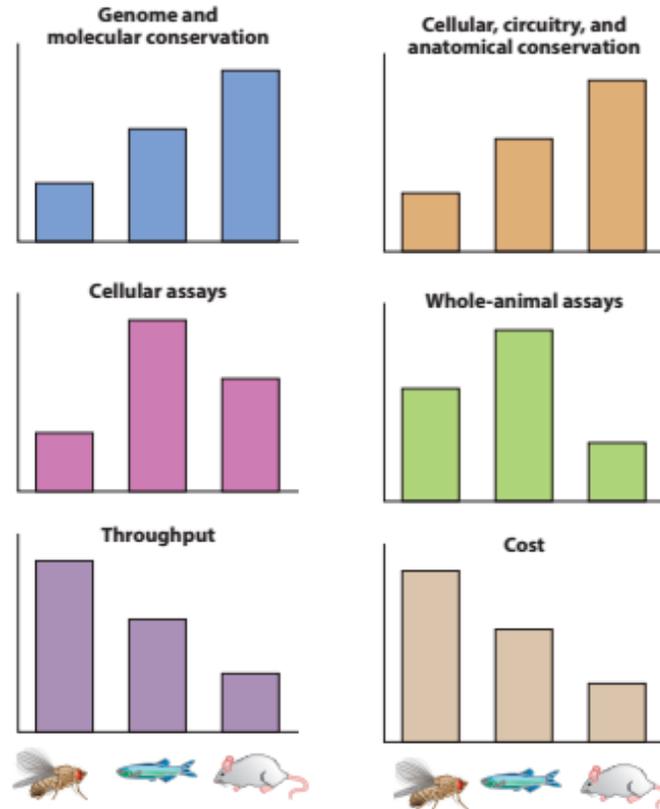
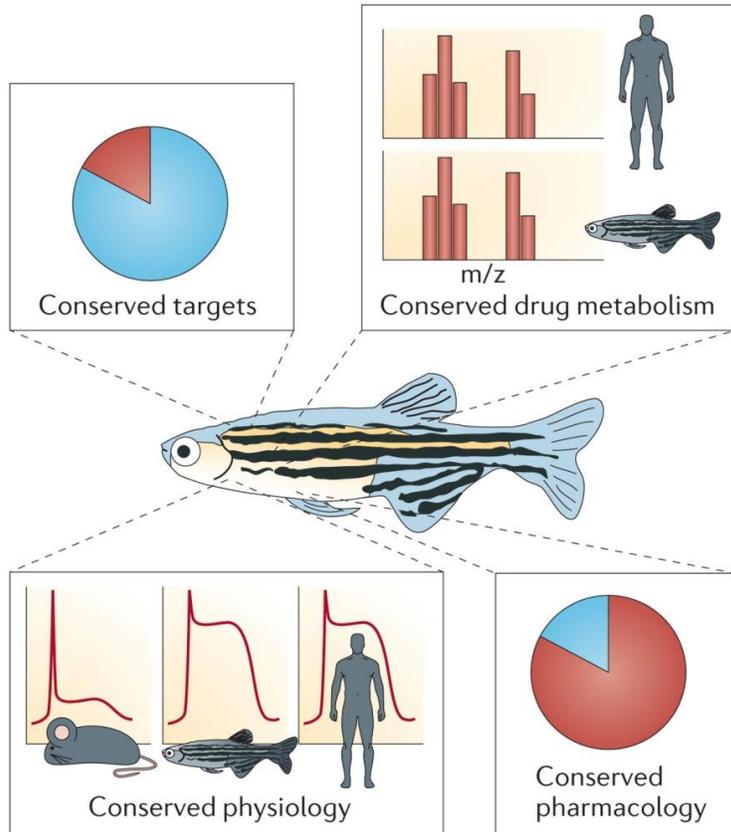


September 18, 2023

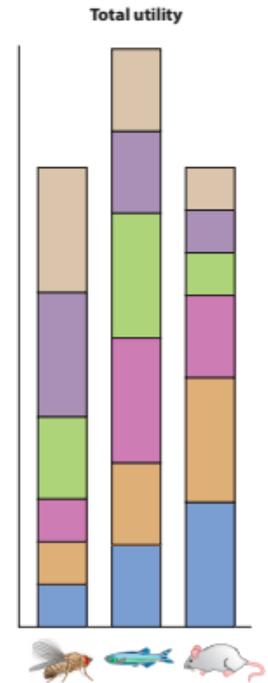


Национальный медицинский  
исследовательский центр имени В. А. Алмазова

# Zebrafish as a model in biomedicine



**#1**



Nature Reviews | Drug Discovery

MacRae & Peterson, 2015

**#2**

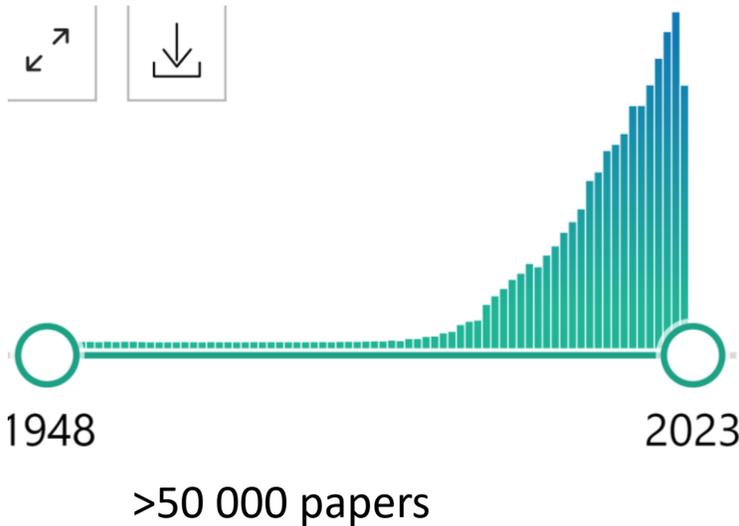
## Animal Research in Great Britain in 2017

**3,789,373 procedures**

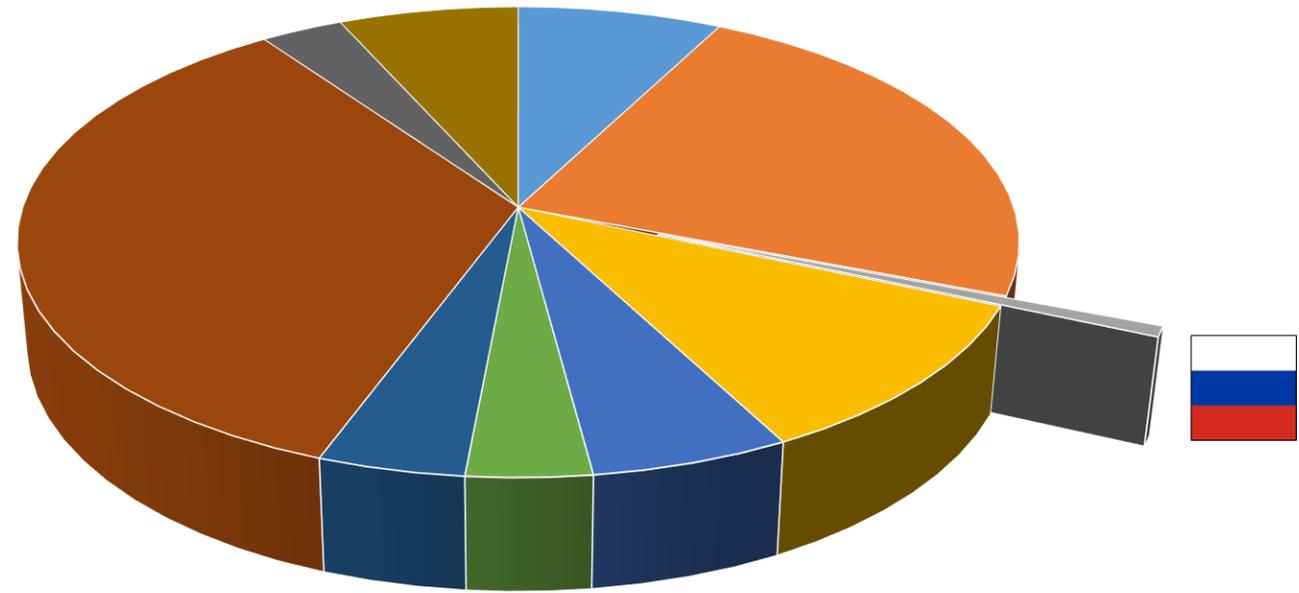
Research facilities in Great Britain must record the number of procedures carried out on animals. A procedure can be as mild as an injection, or as severe as an organ transplant. Most procedures are classified as mild or sub-threshold; however in 2017 3.6% were classed as severe.

### Number of Procedures by Species



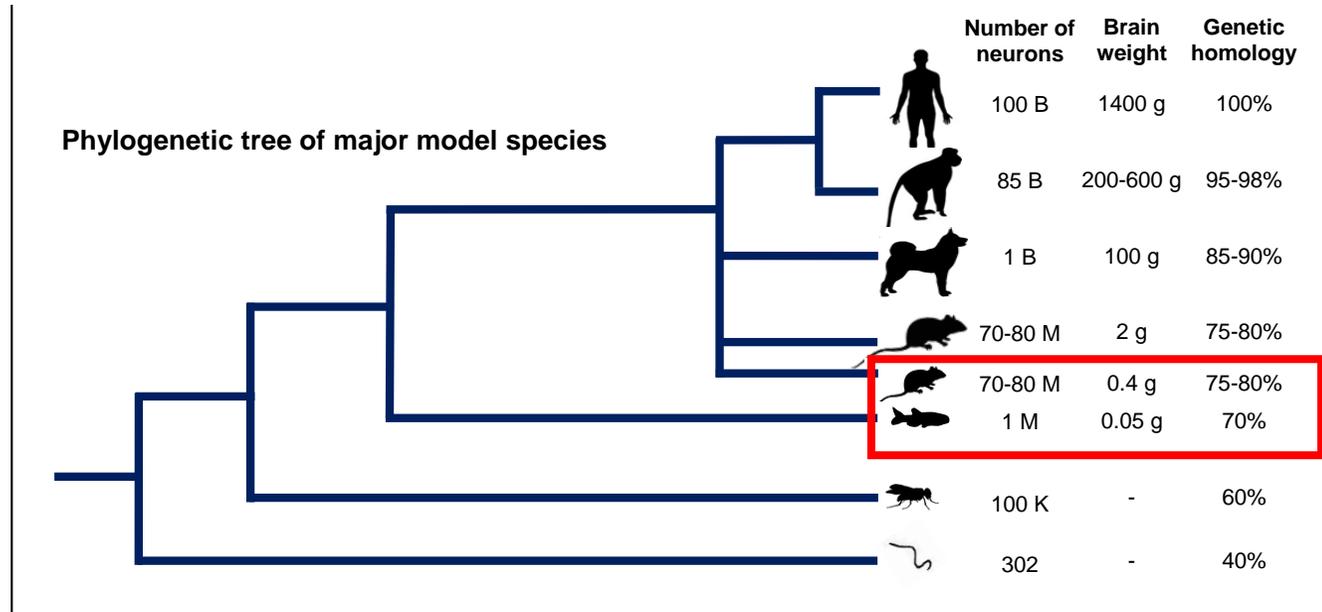


# Zebrafish publications (%) by major world countries



- United Kingdom
- China
- **Russia**
- Germany
- France
- Spain
- Italy
- USA
- Brazil
- Japan

# Zebrafish as a genetic machine



Stewart et al 2014



Genetic homology

# Zebrafish as a translational machine



400 mya

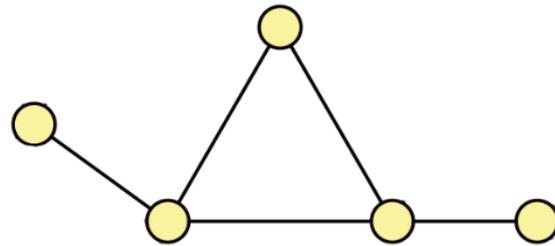
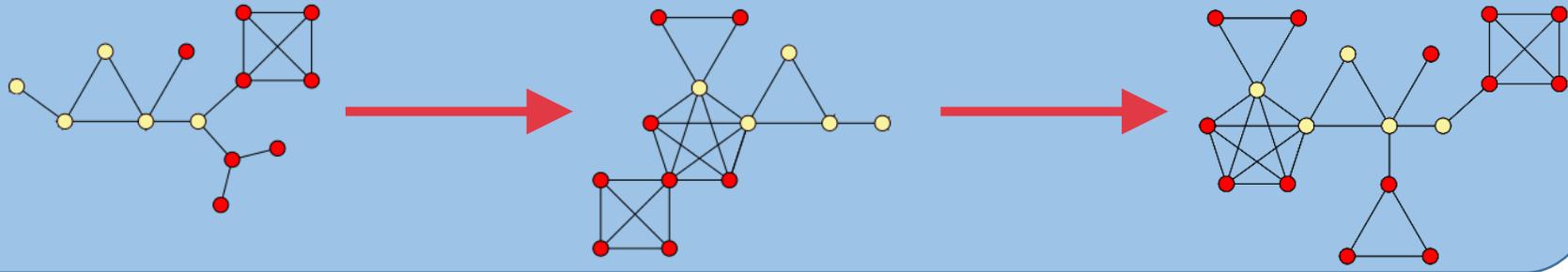


300 mya



70 mya

Pathogenesis



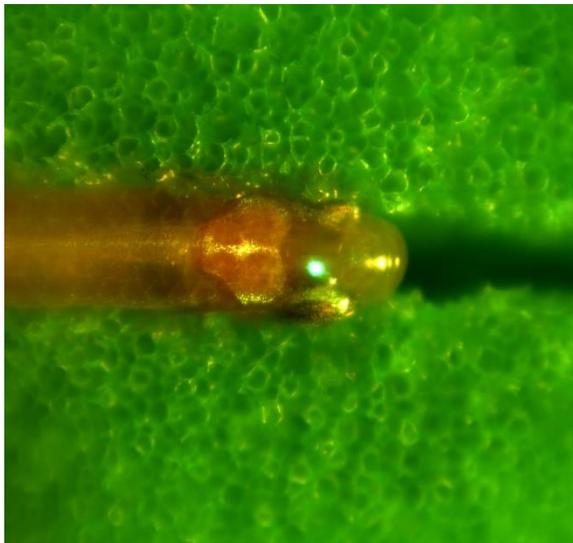
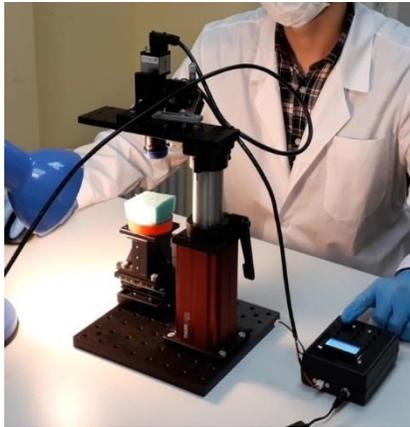
Conserved core of the pathology



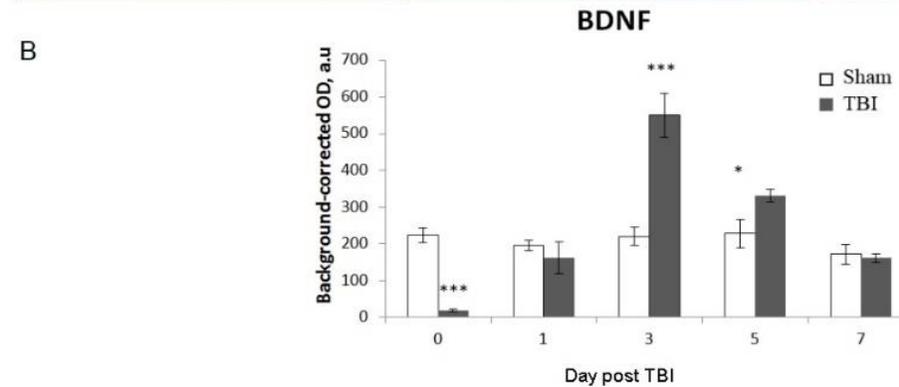
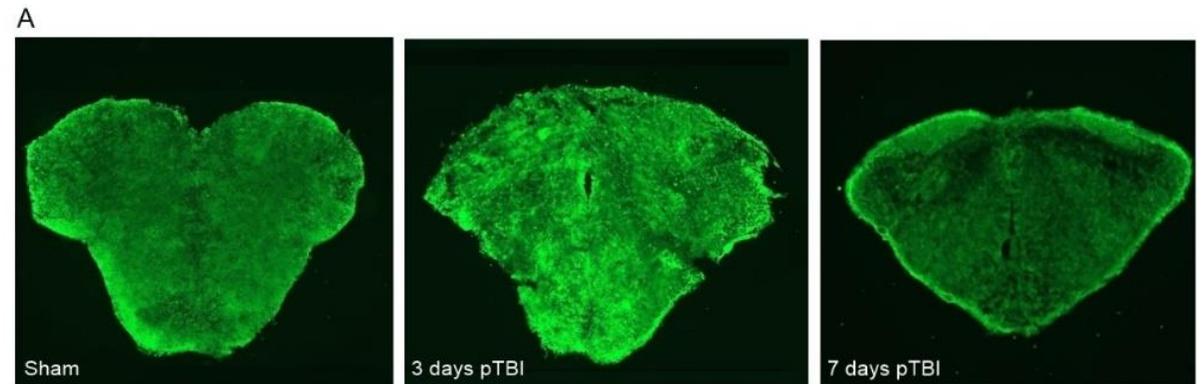
# Laser-induced brain trauma



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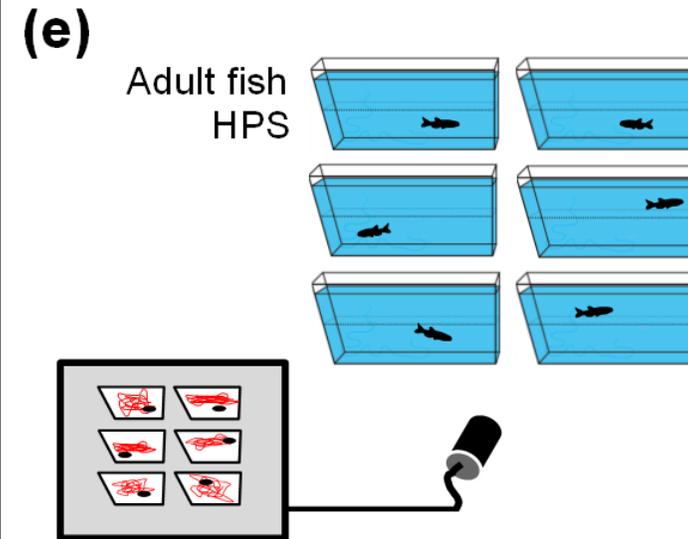
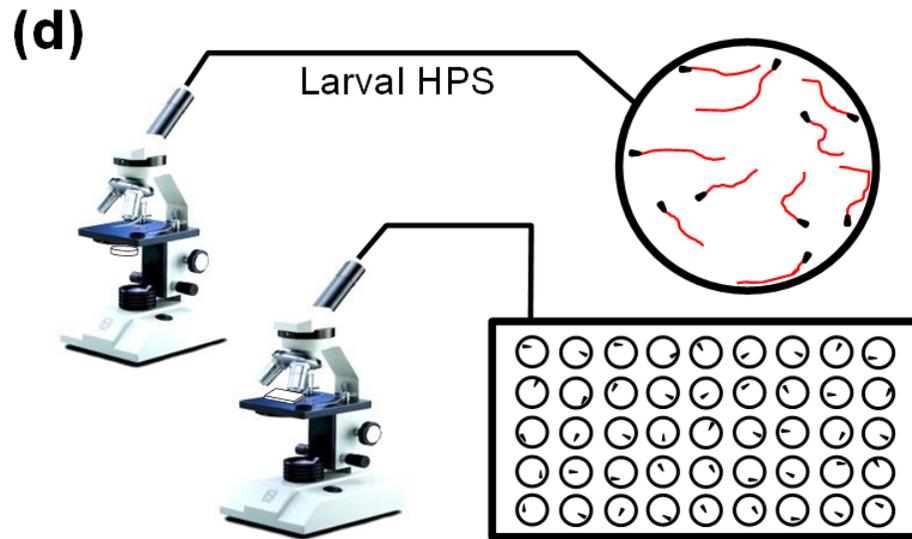


## BDNF expression in telencephalon



# High-throughput drug screening in zebrafish

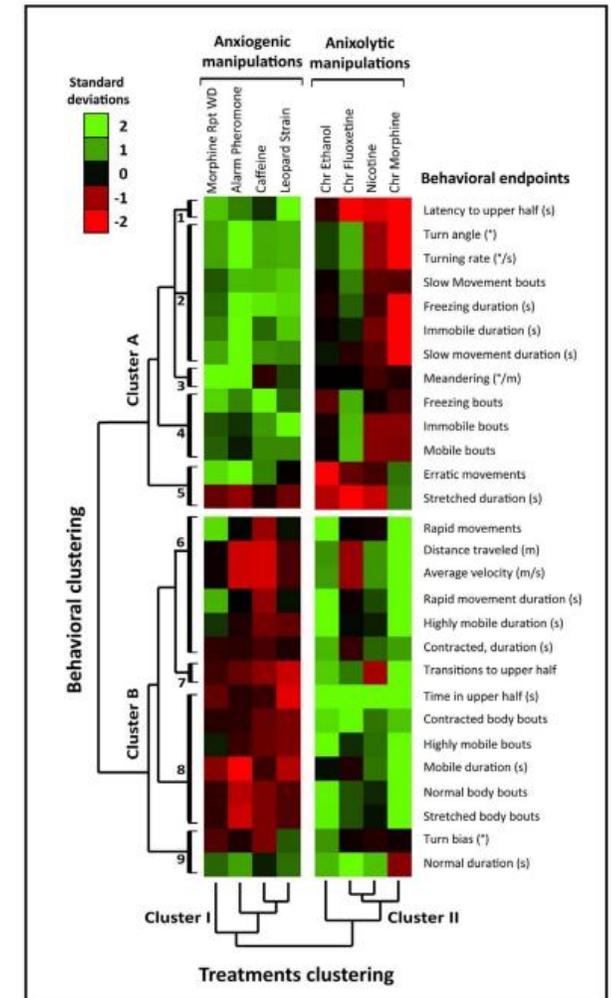
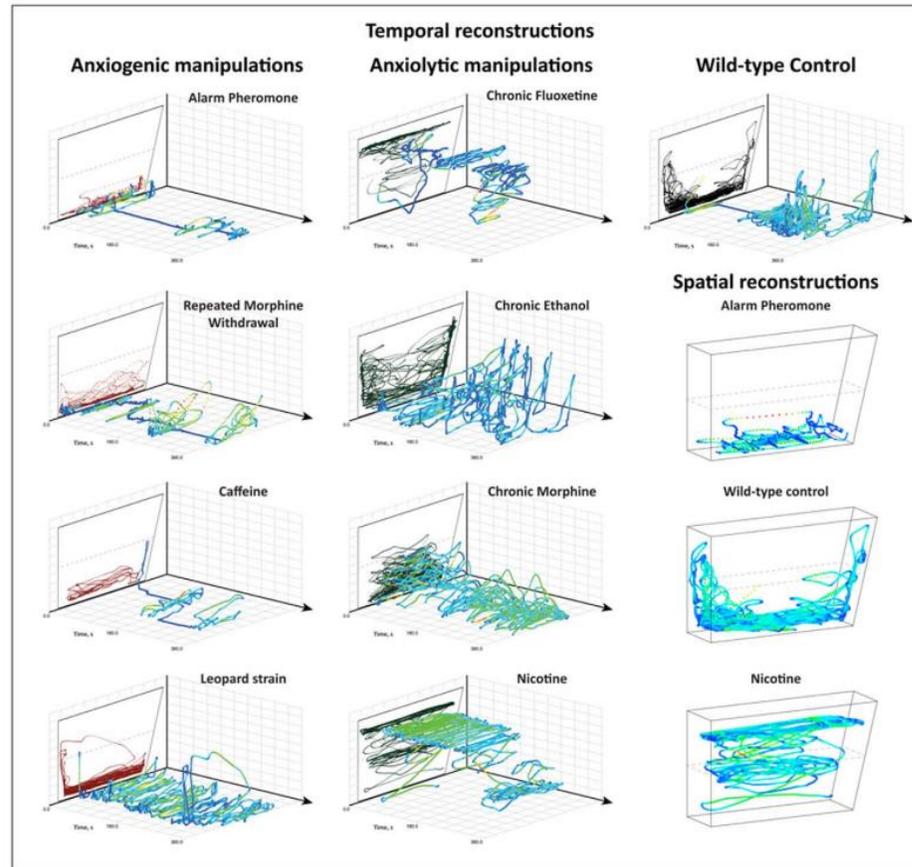
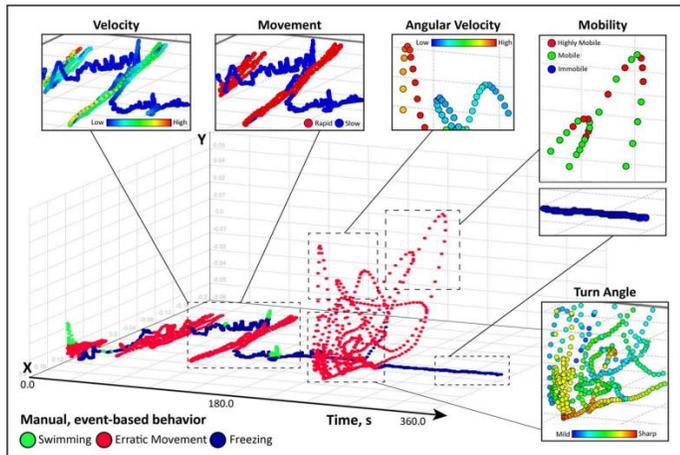
Can test 10 000 drugs a day!



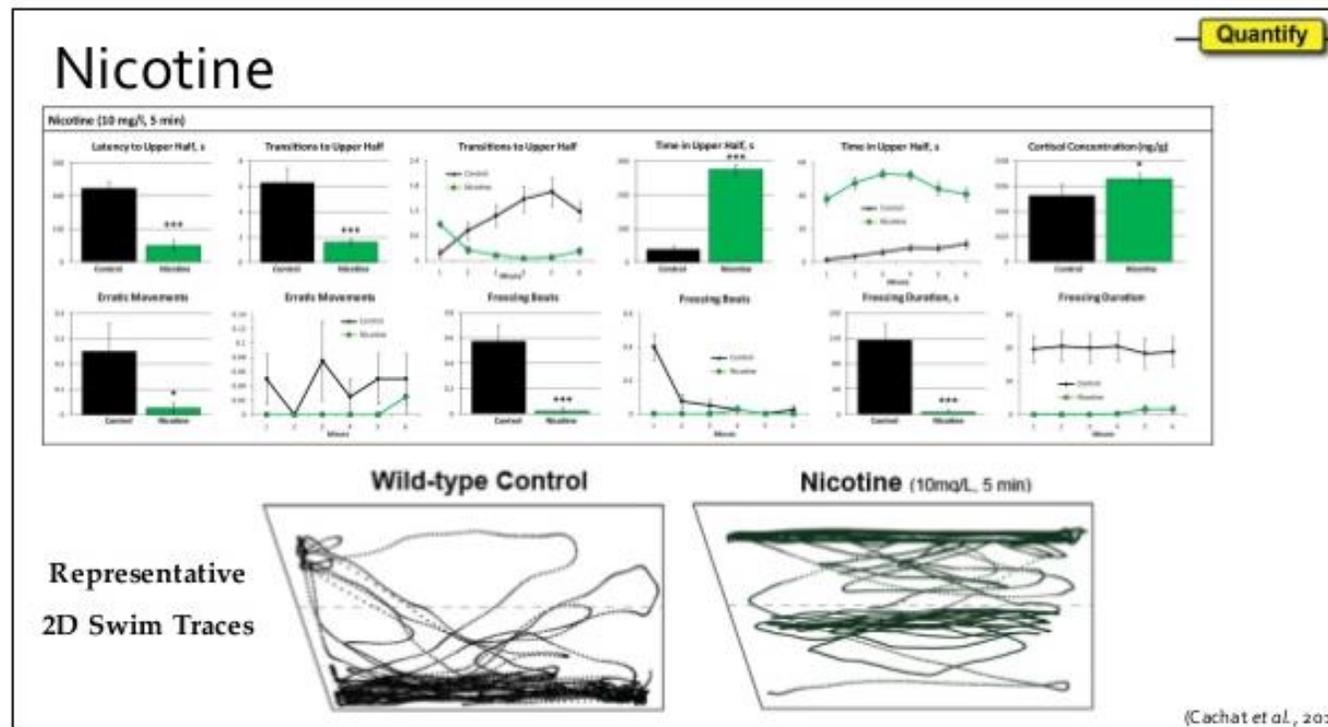
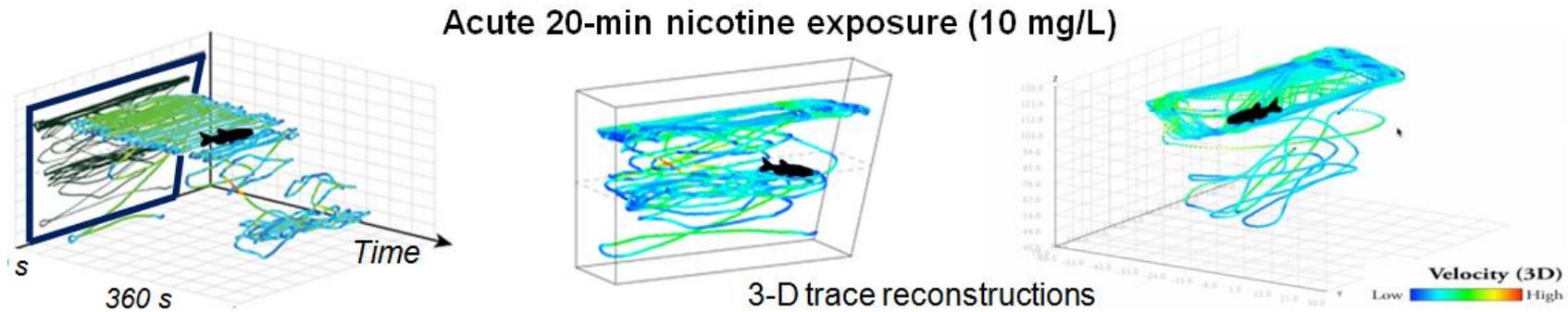


# Three-Dimensional Neurophenotyping of Adult Zebrafish Behavior

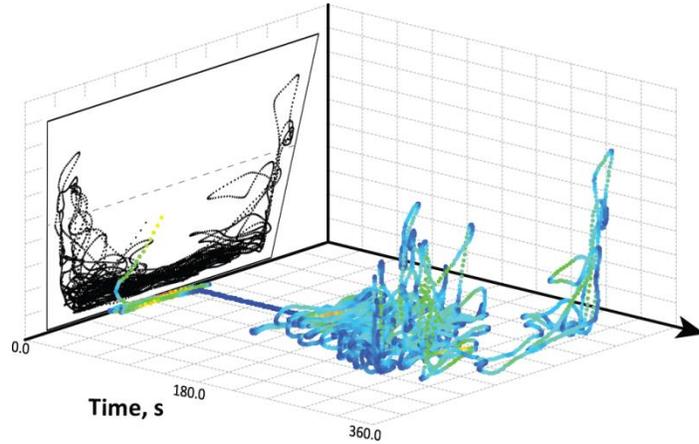
Jonathan Cachat, Adam Stewart, Eli Utterback, Peter Hart, Siddharth Gaikwad, Keith Wong, Evan Kyzar, Nadine Wu, Allan V. Kalueff\*



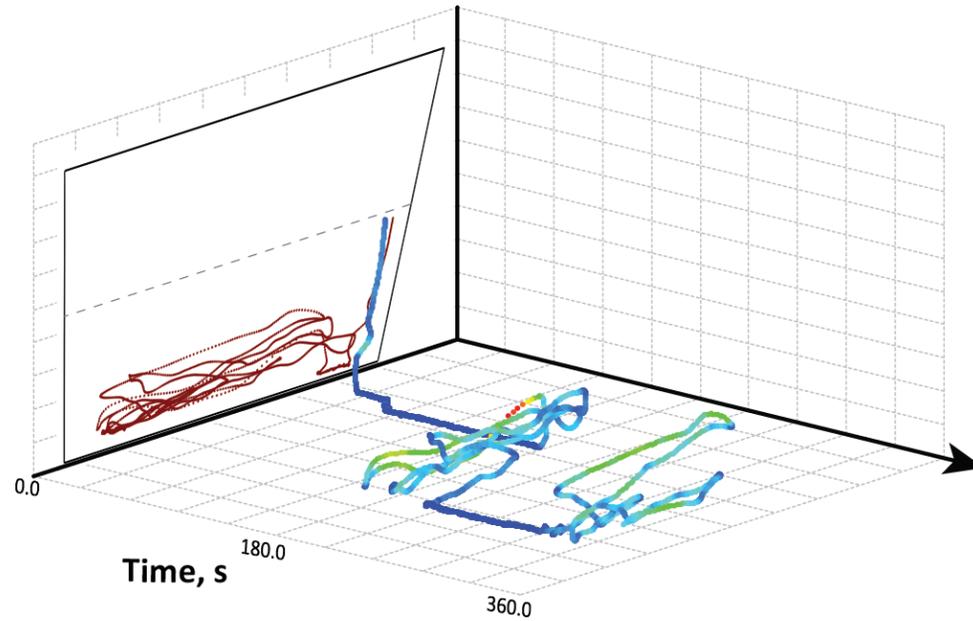
# Острые эффекты никотина (10 мг/л)



# Anxiogenic Treatments

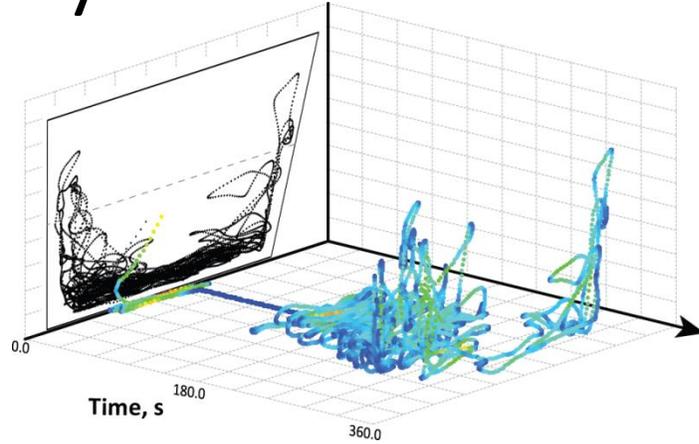


**Wild-type Control**

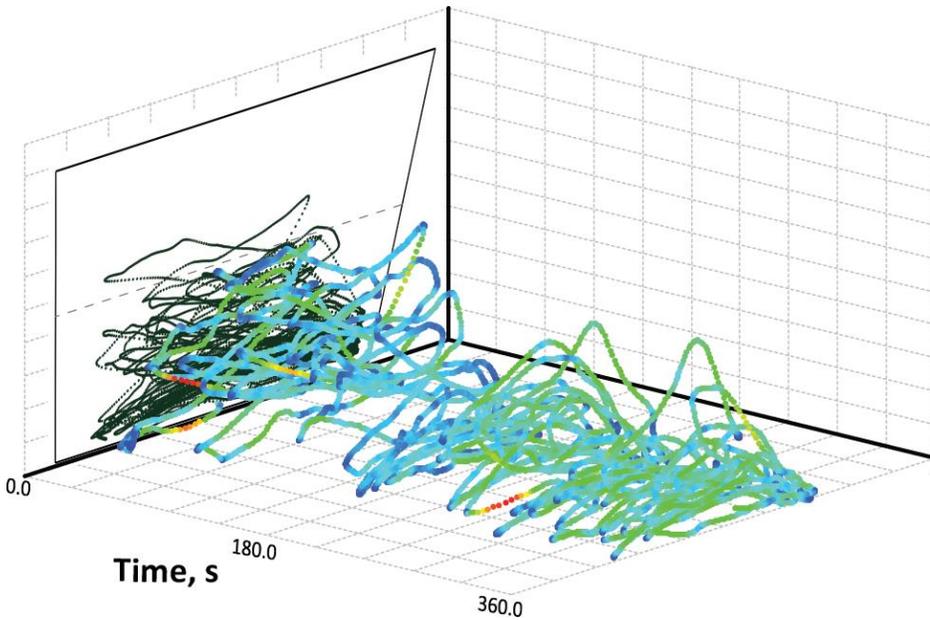


**Caffeine (250mg/L , 20mins)**

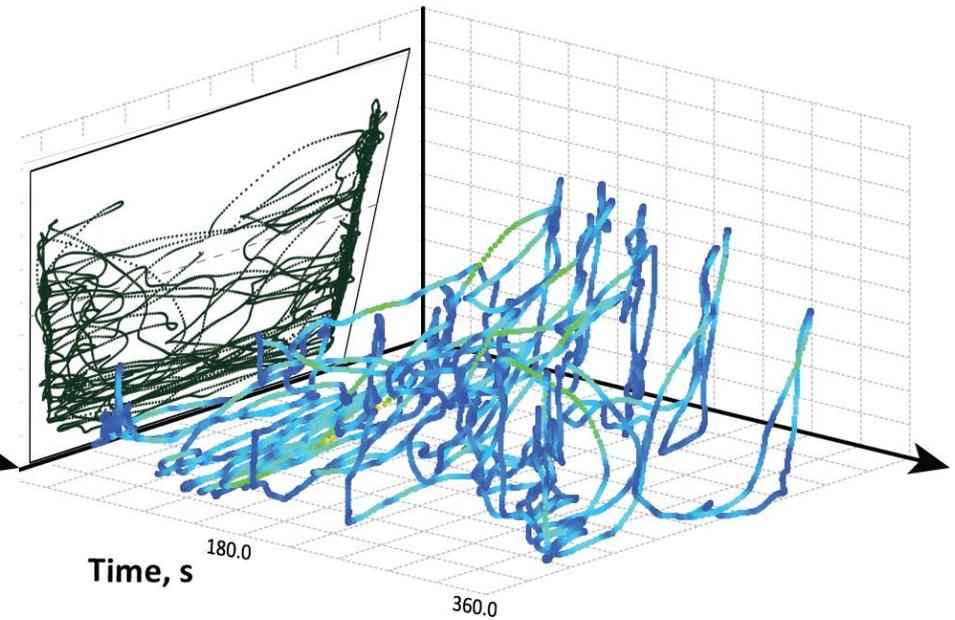
# Anxiolytic Treatments



**Wild-type Control**



**Chronic Morphine (1.5mg/L, 2 wks)**



**Chronic Ethanol (0.3%, 2 wks)**

# First application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to zebrafish CNS models

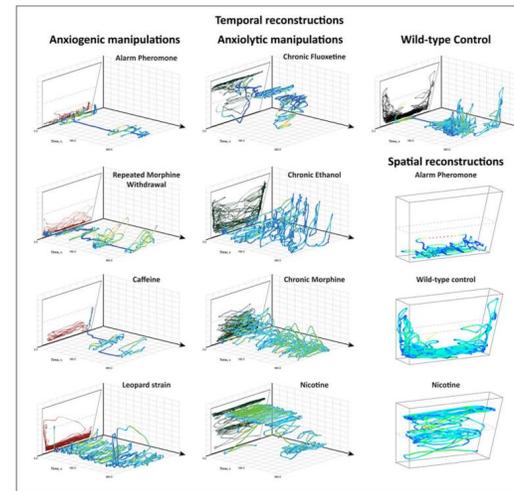
➤ Prog Neuropsychopharmacol Biol Psychiatry. 2022 Jan 10;112:110405.  
doi: 10.1016/j.pnpbp.2021.110405. Epub 2021 Jul 25.

## Artificial intelligence-driven phenotyping of zebrafish psychoactive drug responses

Dmitrii V Bozhko <sup>1</sup>, Vladislav O Myrov <sup>1</sup>, Sofia M Kolchanova <sup>1</sup>, Aleksandr I Polovian <sup>1</sup>,  
Georgii K Galumov <sup>1</sup>, Konstantin A Demin <sup>2</sup>, Konstantin N Zabegalov <sup>3</sup>, Tatiana Strekalova  
Murilo S de Abreu <sup>5</sup>, Elena V Petersen <sup>6</sup>, Allan V Kalueff <sup>7</sup>

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 34320403 DOI: 10.1016/j.pnpbp.2021.110405



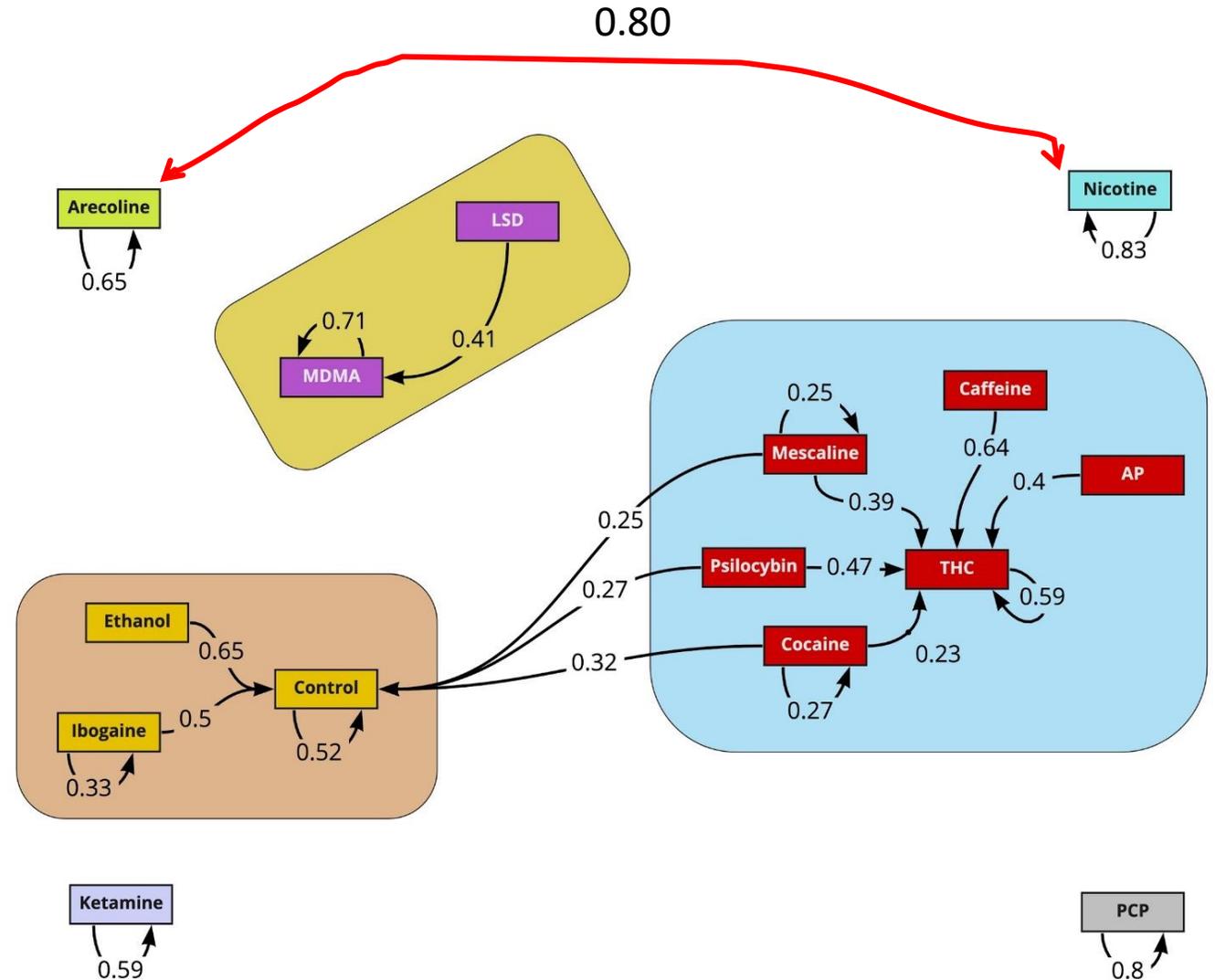
We applied the artificial intelligence (AI) neural network-based algorithms to a large dataset of adult zebrafish locomotor tracks collected previously in a series of in vivo experiments with multiple established psychotropic drugs.

We first trained AI to recognize various drugs from a wide range of psychotropic agents tested, and then confirmed prediction accuracy of trained AI by comparing several agents with known similar behavioral and pharmacological profiles.



# First AI-driven application in zebrafish

Method is based on deep learning by convolutional neural networks (CNN) of a library of 3D drug-induced phenotypes for nearly 30 major CNS drugs



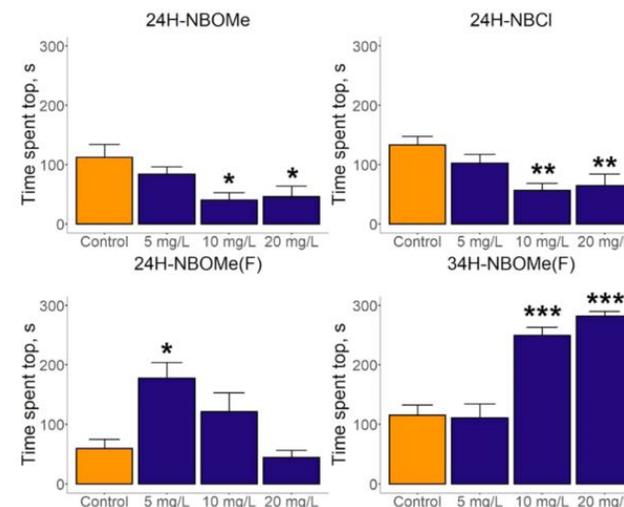
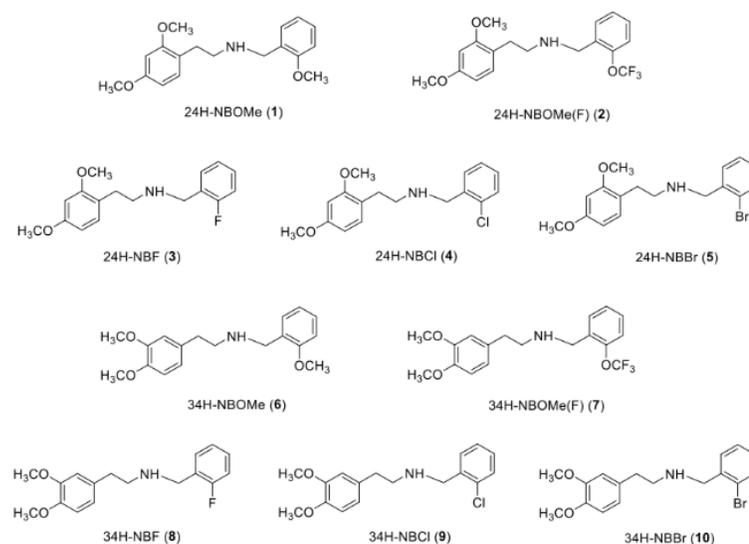
## Acute Behavioral and Neurochemical Effects of Novel *N*-Benzyl-2-Phenylethylamine Derivatives in Adult Zebrafish

Konstantin A. Demin,\* Olga V. Kupriyana, Vadim A. Shevyrin,\* Ksenia A. Derzhavina,  
Nataliya A. Krotova, Nikita P. Ilyin, Tatiana O. Kolesnikova, David S. Galstyan, Yurii M. Kositsyn,  
Abubakar-Askhab S. Khaybaev, Maria V. Seredinskaya, Yaroslav Dubrovskii, Raziya G. Sadykova,  
Maria O. Nerush, Mikael S. Mor, Elena V. Petersen, Tatyana Strelkova, Evgeniya V. Efimova,  
Savelii R. Kuvarzin, Konstantin B. Yenkovyan, Dmitrii V. Bozhko, Vladislav O. Myrov,  
Sofia M. Kolchanova, Aleksander I. Polovian, Georgii K. Galumov, and Allan V. Kalueff\*

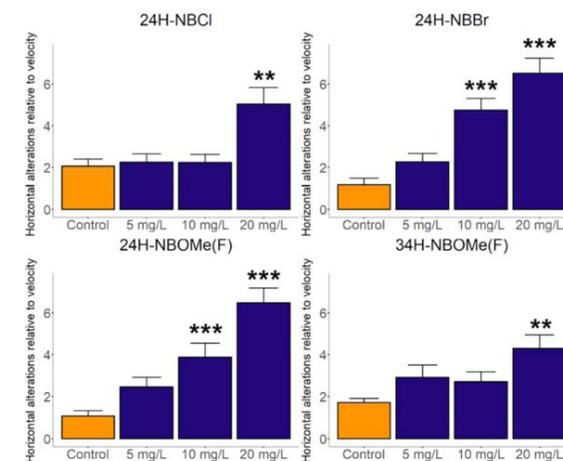
Cite This: <https://doi.org/10.1021/acschemneuro.2c00123>

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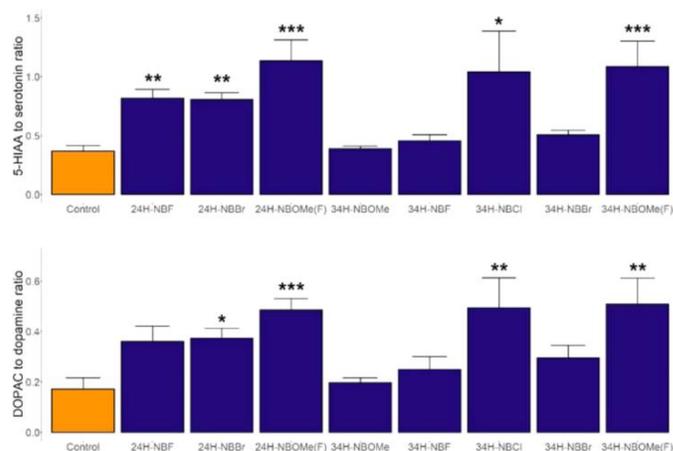
Here, we test a battery of ten novel *N*-benzyl-2-phenylethylamine (NBPEA) derivatives with the 2,4- and 3,4-dimethoxy substitutions in the **phenethylamine moiety** and the -OCH<sub>3</sub>, -OCF<sub>3</sub>, -F, -Cl, and -Br substitutions in the ortho position of the **phenyl ring of the *N*-benzyl moiety**, assessing their acute behavioral and neurochemical effects in 18 the adult zebrafish



**Figure 2.** Behavioral effects of selected NBPEAs on the anxiety-related top time behavior assessed in the zebrafish NTT. The increased top time typically reflects an anxiolytic-like effect. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  S.E.M. ( $n = 15$ –17 per group). \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  versus control, posthoc Dunn's test for significant Kruskal–Wallis data. Graphs were constructed using ggplot2 R package<sup>139</sup> (also see Table S1 for statistical details).

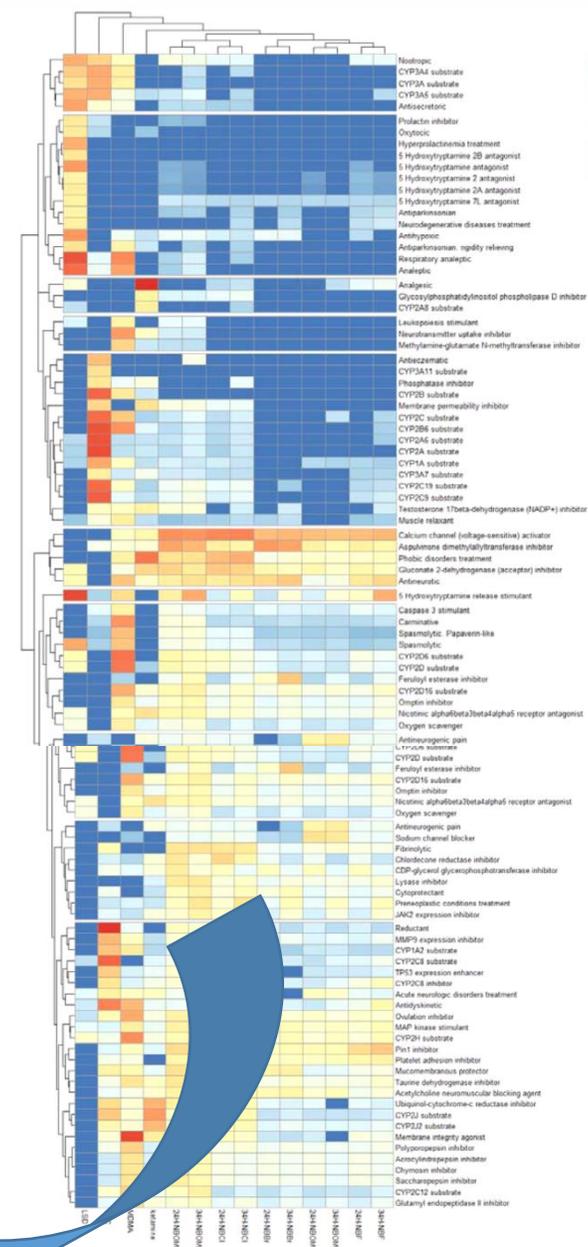


**Figure 3.** Behavioral effects of selected NBPEAs on the horizontal "shuttling" behavior in the zebrafish NTT. The endpoint was calculated as the total number of left-to-right or right-to-left horizontal transitions and normalized by dividing it by the distance traveled. The increased "shuttling" behavior likely reflects potential hallucinogenic-like properties. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  S.E.M. ( $n = 15$ –17 per group). \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  versus control, posthoc Dunn's test for significant Kruskal–Wallis data. Graphs were constructed using ggplot2 R package<sup>139</sup> (also see Table S1 for statistical details).



**Figure 4.** Altered brain SERT and DAT turnover (assessed as the corresponding metabolite/neurotransmitter ratios) by selected NBPEAs in the adult zebrafish. Data are presented as mean  $\pm$  S.E.M. ( $n = 8-10$  per group). \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  versus control, posthoc Dunn's test for significant Kruskal–Wallis data. Graphs were constructed using ggplot2 R package<sup>139</sup> (also see Table S3 for statistical details).

- Overall, substitutions in the N-benzyl moiety modulate locomotion, and substitutions in the phenethylamine moiety alter zebrafish anxiety-like behavior, also affecting the brain serotonin and/or dopamine turnover.
- Computational analyses of zebrafish behavioral data by artificial intelligence identified several distinct clusters for these agents, including **anxiogenic/hypolocomotor** (24H–NBF, 24H–NBOMe, and 34H–NBF), **behaviorally inert** (34H–NBBr, 34H–NBCl, and 34H–NBOMe), **anxiogenic/hallucinogenic-like** (24H–NBBr, 24H–NBCl, 24 and 24H–NBOMe(F)), and **anxiolytic/hallucinogenic-like** (34H–NBOMe(F)) drugs.
- Our computational analyses also revealed phenotypic similarity of the behavioral activity of some NBPEAs to that of selected conventional serotonergic and ant glutamatergic hallucinogens.
- In silico functional molecular activity modeling further supported the overlap of the drug targets for NBPEAs tested here and the conventional serotonergic and ant glutamatergic hallucinogens.



Heatmap diagram showing the probability of functional activities (Pa, %) of the drugs assessed using PASSonline software<sup>139</sup> with hierarchical clustering. Note the tight clustering of novel NBPEAs with MDMA and ketamine (see main functional activity clusters summarized in Table 4).





# Conclusions

Zebrafish provide an excellent platform for **in-vivo** CNS drug screening

Zebrafish-based platforms enable high-throughput, automated analyses of drug-induced responses in vivo

AI-based systems empower zebrafish-based drug screening platforms, as they:

- Help create comprehensive libraries of drug-induced responses
- Provide **unbiased extraction** of drug-induced phenotypical data
- Compare experimental data with those in reference libraries of known activity
- Analyze drug responses **to predict their pharmacological activity**

Thank you for your attention!

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