A Smoking Gun Treatment for Parkinson’s Disease?

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Billings Building—Rosedale Room

SPEAKER:

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Abstract

Parkinson’s disease (PD) is a devastating neurological disorder projected to reach pandemic proportions by 2040. As a result, developing disease modifying treatments for PD has become an urgent and unmet medical need. Interestingly, ~60 years of epidemiological data show that chronic tobacco use is inversely correlated with the risk for PD. Based on this finding, we have focused on understanding mechanisms by which nicotine and nicotinic ligands might mediate this effect. Our research over the past several years has begun to uncover a novel sex-specific intracellular mechanism by which nicotine and nicotinic ligands might mediate neuroprotection of the substantia nigra pars compacta dopaminergic neurons lost in PD. In this talk, I will summarize our past, current and future research in this area, pointing to the potential for developing new and clinically relevant disease modifying therapies for PD.

Publications

