

Award Roster

Targeted Research Initiative for Mood Disorders FY2008

Investigator: Tracy Butler, M.D.
Institution: Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University
Title of Project: Epilepsy, Depression and Growth Hormone
Lay Summary: Depression affects a large proportion of patients with epilepsy, and is likely due in part to biological mechanism. Hormonal dysregulation due to the disruptive effects of seizures and interictal epileptiform discharges on brain regions responsible for controlling hormone release likely contributes to high rates of depression in epilepsy. This project will examine levels of growth hormone (GH) – a hormone essential for optimal physical and psychological functioning – in patients with epilepsy both before and after seizures to determine if some patients may be suffering from a subtle form of GH deficiency, and whether such GH deficiency is associated with depression. Results from this project have the potential to inform development of GH supplementation therapy as a novel, safe, already-available treatment for patients suffering from epilepsy-related depression.

Award Amount: \$40,000.00
Supported by the Patricia L. Nangle Fund

Investigator: Adele Viguera, M.D.
Institution: Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Title of Project: Treatment of Menopausal Symptoms in Epilepsy
Lay Summary: Despite the fact that more than one million women are expected to reach menopause each year, the relationship between menopause, epilepsy, and treatment for menopausal-related symptoms, have not been systematically investigated. While women with epilepsy experience menopausal symptoms including hot flashes, night sweats, sleep disturbance, and mood symptoms, there are no epidemiologic studies examining the prevalence or severity of these symptoms in this patient population. With respect to treatment, fewer women are receiving hormonal replacement therapy because of health risks, leaving many women symptomatic. For women with epilepsy, hormone replacement may increase seizure frequency and alter clearance of some antiepileptics. Given these treatment obstacles, it is remarkable that there are no published studies on the efficacy of alternative treatments to hormone replacement therapy for symptomatic women with epilepsy. We plan to address this important and yet unmet clinical need with a randomized clinical trial examining the efficacy of citalopram for the treatment of menopausal symptoms in women with epilepsy.

Award Amount: \$80,000.00
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