

New Research From Clinical Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Clinical Psychological Science*:

[Weaker Memory Performance Exacerbates Stress-Induced Cannabis Craving in Youths' Daily Lives](#)

Robert Miranda, Jr., Stephanie E. Wemm, Hayley Treloar Padovano, Ryan W. Carpenter, Noah N. Emery, Joshua C. Gray, and Ethan H. Mereish



This study examined the interaction of stress, reminders of cannabis use, and craving for the drug among adolescents and young adults. Miranda and colleagues recruited participants who used cannabis at least twice weekly and reported at least one symptom of cannabis abuse. At the beginning of the study, participants performed a memory-for-words test that captured working memory performance. Then, over 4 to 14 days, they were prompted on their mobile devices every 3 hours to report their cannabis cravings, consumption, current levels of stress, and presence of cannabis-related stimuli in their environment (e.g., presence of drug paraphernalia, interactions with people they frequently smoked marijuana with). Individuals reported stronger craving in the evenings and late night relative to the morning, in the presence of other cannabis-related stimuli, and when experiencing more interpersonal stress. Importantly, individuals with weaker working memory performance experienced stronger craving when their stress was heightened than individuals with stronger working memory performance. However, working memory performance did not affect the association between cannabis-related stimuli and craving. These findings indicate that stronger working memory may protect individuals from craving cannabis at stressful moments.

[Predicting Imminent Suicidal Thoughts and Nonfatal Attempts: The Role of Complexity](#)

Jessica D. Ribeiro, Xieying Huang, Kathryn R. Fox, Colin G. Walsh, and Kathryn P. Linthicum

Most of the past research on suicidal thoughts and behaviors (STBs) relied on long follow-ups and examined risk factors in isolation when predicting suicide is more complex. To address whether these

methodological constraints have the ability to predict suicide risk, the researchers recruited a large sample of individuals worldwide who were at elevated risk of STBs, evaluating them in a first session and again 3, 14, and 28 days later. The researchers also used machine-learning algorithms to examine the complexity underlying suicide risk. Results indicated that machine-learning algorithms were better than individual follow-ups at predicting STBs. Some predictive factors such as suicide ideation, were already strong predictors in more standard analyses, but complex models in this research were a way to better predict imminent suicidal thoughts and nonfatal suicide attempts. Taken together, these findings support the use of complex models and inclusion of artificial intelligence in clinical decision making.

[The Influence of Stress on Depression and Substance Use Problems Among Young Male Same-Sex Couples: Relationship Functioning as an Underlying Mechanism](#)

Brian A. Feinstein, Elizabeth McConnell, Christina Dyar, Brian Mustanski, and Michael E. Newcomb

To examine the associations between stress and health (including depression and substance use) among male same-sex couples, Feinstein and colleagues analyzed data from an ongoing longitudinal study on HIV and substance use among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. Participants completed measures of perceived stress, internalized stigma (e.g., fear of coming out), microaggressions (e.g. someone expressing a stereotype, such as “Gay men are so good at fashion”), victimization (e.g., being physically assaulted), outness, depression, alcohol-use problems, marijuana-use problems, and relationship functioning (i.e., satisfaction, trust, and commitment). Results indicated that when a member of the couple reported internalized stigma and microaggressions, relationship interactions were more negative and were linked with greater depression and alcohol abuse. These findings suggest that individual stress might increase conflict within a relationship. Results also highlight the importance of considering general stress as a risk factor for negative health outcomes among male same-sex couples. Relationship education and interventions focused on sexual minority individuals and same-sex couples may be enhanced by showing them strategies to cope with stress and understand how their relationship quality influences health, Feinstein and colleagues propose.

[Heterogeneity of the Anxiety-Related Attention Bias: A Review and Working Model for Future Research](#)

Tracy A. Dennis-Tiway, Amy Krain Roy, Samantha Denefrio, and Sarah Myruski

Anxiety-related attention bias (AB) is characterized by selective or exaggerated attention toward threatening information and seems to be a concept with different aspects and with complex relationships with anxiety. In this review, Dennis-Tiway and colleagues propose a working model of AB that incorporates subtypes and variability. They say AB should no longer be considered solely a tendency to focus attention on a threat instead of away from it. Behavioral and neurophysiological research indicates, for instance, that AB toward threat is associated with distress-related disorders, such as generalized anxiety disorder. Meanwhile, AB *away* from threat is associated with fear-related disorders, such as phobias. According to this threat-discrimination and cognitive-control model of AB, four subtypes of AB heterogeneity can be identified: (a) labile, characterized by low threat-safety discrimination (TD; ability to discriminate between safe and threatening cues) and low cognitive control (CC), with high variability in AB; (b) vigilant, characterized by high TD and low CC, with a bias toward threatening information; (c) avoidant, characterized by high TD and high CC, with a bias away from threatening information; and (d) no bias, characterized by low TD and high CC. The authors propose that this model can lead to personalized interventions for anxiety disorders, with treatment tailored to an individual’s

AB subtype.