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ALCOHOL INTAKE DURING ADOLESCENCE INDUCES ALCOHOL ADDICTION PHENOTYPES IN TWO ANIMAL MODELS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Schizophrenia is a mental disorder characterized by a series of positive, negative or cognitive symptoms but with also the particularity of exhibiting high rate of comorbid use of drugs of abuse. While more than 80% of schizophrenics are smokers, the second drug the most consumed is alcohol with dramatic consequences on frequency and intensity of psychotic episodes and on life expectancy. Here we investigated the impact of alcohol intake during adolescence on the subsequent occurrence of alcohol addiction-like behavior in neonatal ventral hippocampal lesion (NVHL) rats, and in the STOP/MAP6 knock-out mice. Our findings demonstrated an increased liability to addictive behaviors in adult animals after voluntary alcohol intake during adolescence. NVHL rats displayed several signs of alcohol use disorder such as a loss of control over alcohol intake and high motivation to consume alcohol, associated with a higher resistance to extinction. In addition, once NVHL rats relapsed, they maintained higher drinking levels than controls. The STOP/MAP6 mice displayed increased voluntary intake associated to elevated resistance to the negative effects of alcohol. Our results are in accordance with epidemiological studies underlying the particular vulnerability to alcohol addiction after adolescent exposure to alcohol and highlight the fact that schizophrenic subjects may be particularly at risk even after light alcohol consumption.

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