

Deborah Kurrasch

Associate Professor, Department of Medical Genetics at University of Calgary

Calgary, AB, CA

Kurrasch's research is focused on genetic programs that govern hypothalamic development using both mice and zebrafish as model organisms.

Biography

Deborah M. Kurrasch is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medical Genetics at the University of Calgary and a Scientist at the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute. Dr. Kurrasch's research is focused neural development using both mice and zebrafish as model organisms. The Kurrasch laboratory is particularly interested in how chemicals in our environment might be affecting normal brain development in utero. Her lab has shown that the exposure to the plasticizer bisphenol A (BPA) and its replacement BPS causes more neurons to be born at the wrong time, thereby potentially leading to inappropriate circuitry formations that may lead to problems later in life such as ADHD. Currently, her lab is exploring potential agents that may block the effects of these chemical during pregnancy and also is now collaborating with clinicians to translate her work into humans.

In addition, her lab has also developed a novel drug screening platform that uses zebrafish seeks to uncover therapies for a variety of CNS disorders. Their lead compound is now starting clinical trials for epilepsy and she is now pivoting her platform to other clinically resistant disorders such as autism. Her work is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, among other private foundations, and she currently is the Lead PI on a large, multi-center grant funded by Brain Canada.

Dr. Kurrasch received her PhD in Molecular Pharmacology from Purdue University and conducted two postdoctoral fellowships, one at the University of Texas – Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas and one at the University of California – San Francisco. Dr. Kurrasch has received various awards for her scholarly work, and was recently selected to Calgary's Top 40 Under 40 (2012).

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Research, Pharmaceuticals

Areas of Expertise

Molecular Biology, Developmental Biology, Pharmacology, Neuroscience, Genetics, Confocal Microscopy, In Vivo, Scientific Writing, Drug Discovery, Bisphenol A , Bisphenols

Affiliations

CEO and Co-Founder : Path Therapeutics Inc.

Event Appearances

Hormone control of neural progenitors during embryonic brain development, and interference by EDCs

Gordon Research Conference on Environmental Endocrine Disruptors

Development of non-neuronal cells critical for central control of obesity

2016 Obesity Summit

The role of microglia in hypothalamic development

Satellite Symposium on Forebrain Development, Canadian Developmental Biology Meeting

Bisphenol A and its replacement BPS induce precocious neurogenesis and hyperactivity in zebrafish

The International Chemical Congress of Pacific Basin Societies

A zebrafish-based platform to uncover drugs that restore mitochondrial function

Zebrafish for Personalized Medicine Conference

Education

Purdue University

Ph.D. Pharmacology

Purdue University

B.S. Genetics

Accomplishments

Calgary's Top 40 Under 40

2012

"They are our educators, innovators and entrepreneurs. They rule the C-suite and both the corporate and volunteer boardrooms. Whether in the arts, non-profits, oil and gas, law, finance or medicine, they are doing more and doing it better and faster."

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