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1 **The Role of Aberrant Neural Oscillations in the Hippocampal-Medial Prefrontal Cortex**  
2 **Circuit in Neurodevelopmental and Neurological Disorders**

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11  
12 **Abstract**

13 The hippocampus (HPC) and medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) have well-established roles in  
14 cognition, emotion, and sensory processing. In recent years, interests have shifted towards  
15 developing a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying interactions between the  
16 HPC and mPFC in achieving these functions. Considerable research supports the idea that  
17 synchronized activity between the HPC and the mPFC is a general mechanism by which  
18 brain functions are regulated. In this review, we summarize current knowledge on the  
19 hippocampal-medial prefrontal cortex (HPC-mPFC) circuit in normal brain function with a  
20 focus on oscillations and highlight several neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders  
21 associated with aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry. We further discuss oscillatory dynamics  
22 across the HPC-mPFC circuit as potentially useful biomarkers to assess interventions for  
23 neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders. Finally, advancements in brain stimulation,  
24 gene therapy and pharmacotherapy are explored as promising therapies for disorders with  
25 aberrant HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics.

26  
27 **Keywords:** hippocampus; medial prefrontal cortex; neural oscillations; neurological disorders;  
28 neurodevelopmental disorders; oscillotherapeutics

39 **Introduction**

40 It is well established that the HPC and mPFC are important regions that facilitate cognition,  
41 emotion, and sensory processes (Jin and Maren, 2015; Ruggiero et al., 2021). A growing body  
42 of evidence suggests that information sharing between the HPC and mPFC is required for  
43 cognitive processes and successful execution of behaviours (Harris and Gordon, 2015;  
44 Negrón-Oyarzo et al., 2018; Preston and Eichenbaum, 2013; Salimi et al., 2021; Tang et al.,  
45 2021; Wirt and Hyman, 2017). Recent evidence further highlights the importance of  
46 communication between the HPC and mPFC during learning and memory processes (Dickson  
47 et al., 2022; Morici et al., 2022). Efforts to understand the pathophysiology of various disorders  
48 have focused on identifying abnormalities in regions of the HPC and mPFC underlying  
49 symptoms of these disorders. It is becoming increasingly clear that neurodevelopmental and  
50 neurological disorders are not only due to a circumscribed deficit in the HPC and/or mPFC,  
51 but also represent a distributed impairment involving HPC-mPFC connectivity (Bast et al.,  
52 2017; Calabro et al., 2020; Colgin, 2011; Godsil et al., 2013; Jones and Wilson, 2005; Li et al.,  
53 2015; Sigurdsson and Duvarci, 2016).

54 Neural oscillations are the fundamental mechanism to enable coordinated activity during  
55 normal brain functioning (Buzsáki and Draguhn, 2004; Singer, 1999). There is abundant  
56 evidence for a close relationship between the occurrence of oscillations and cognitive and  
57 behavioural responses (Fries et al., 2001; Uhlhaas and Singer, 2010). Neural oscillations and  
58 synchronization reflect regional and interregional communication between cortical areas. In  
59 general, there is a correlation between the distance over which synchronization is observed  
60 and the frequency of the synchronized oscillations. Short-distance synchronization tends to  
61 occur at higher frequencies (>30 Hz), and long-distance synchronization often manifests in  
62 the low-frequency range (<20 Hz) (von Stein and Sarnthein, 2000). Recent studies further  
63 suggest that cross-frequency modulation across brain areas may serve a functional role in  
64 neuronal computation and communication (Womelsdorf et al., 2010). While high-frequency  
65 brain activity reflects local domains of cortical processing, low-frequency brain rhythms are  
66 dynamically entrained across distributed brain regions by both external sensory input and  
67 internal cognitive events. Therefore, cross-frequency modulation may serve as a mechanism  
68 to transfer information from large-scale brain networks operating at behavioural timescales to  
69 fast, local cortical processing required for effective computation and synaptic modification,  
70 thus integrating functional systems across multiple spatiotemporal scales (Canolty and Knight,  
71 2010).

72 In this review, we present recent evidence for anatomical and synchronous activity between  
73 the HPC and mPFC. We detail work revealing that the HPC-mPFC circuitry is essential for  
74 cognitive, emotional, and sensory processes. Based on anatomical and electrophysiological  
75 evidence, we further examine the possible neurobiological causes of impaired HPC-mPFC  
76 oscillations and the involvement of aberrant HPC-mPFC oscillatory activity underlying several  
77 neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders. Finally, advancements in deep brain  
78 stimulation, gene therapy, and pharmacotherapy are explored as useful interventions for  
79 various disorders associated with aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry.

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## 85 **Animal Models in Neuroscience Research**

86 Animal research has formed vital contributions to understanding neural mechanisms and  
87 disorders. Non-human primates have been at the forefront of research efforts, and rodents  
88 have been the most widely used models in neuroscience research. Despite major differences  
89 in anatomical organization of brains and a 17,000-fold variability in brain volume across  
90 mammalian species, the temporal dynamics within and across brain networks remain  
91 remarkably preserved (Buzsáki et al., 2013; van Heukelum et al., 2020; Laubach et al., 2018).  
92 Furthermore, despite a small variability of individual oscillations across species, frequency  
93 ranges within species and their cross-frequency interactions are supported by the same  
94 fundamental mechanisms and can be adequately characterized across species (Buzsáki et  
95 al., 2013). Therefore, valuable insight from studies involving non-human primates and rodents  
96 help with incorporating findings across species into an integrated field of HPC-mPFC research.

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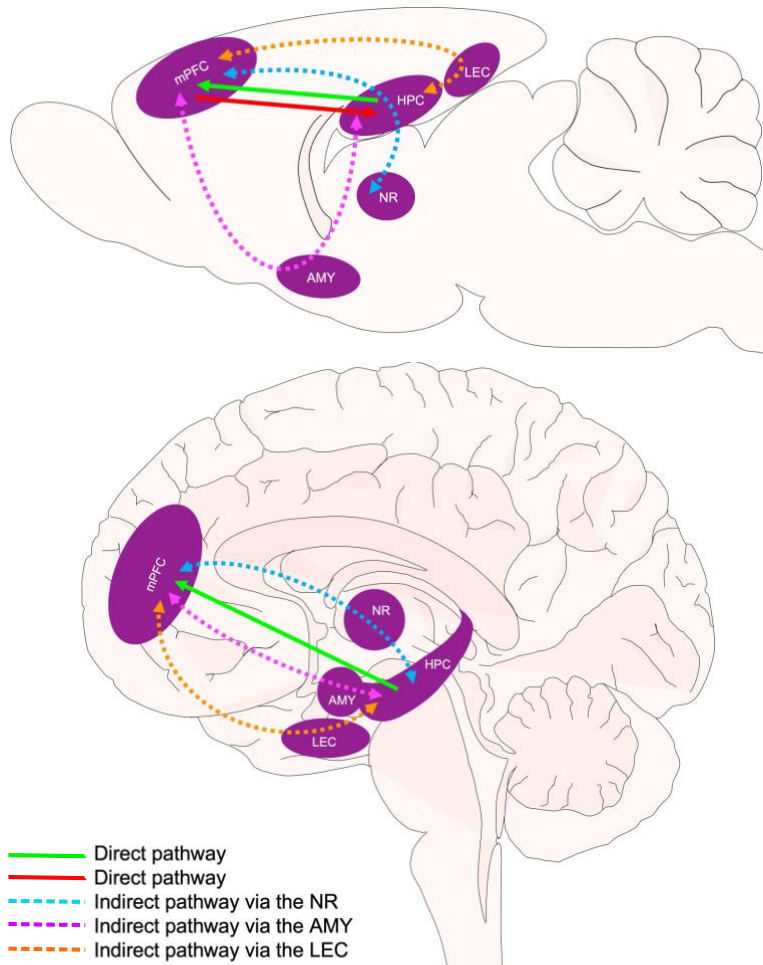
## 98 **Anatomical Organization of the HPC and mPFC**

99 The HPC, located deep in the medial temporal lobe, is typically classified by several  
100 subregions (subiculum, dentate gyrus, cornu ammonis regions CA1-CA3) (Fogwe et al., 2022;  
101 Nuñez and Buño, 2021) and compartments (ventral-dorsal in rodents corresponding to  
102 anterior-posterior in humans) (Fanselow and Dong, 2010). The mPFC broadly refers to the  
103 cortical region anterior to the premotor cortex, and can be organized into dorsal and ventral  
104 subdivisions in rodents (Heidbreder and Groenewegen, 2003; Jobson et al., 2021; Xu et al.,  
105 2019a) and humans (Bzdok et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2019a). Based on cytoarchitectural and  
106 functional differences, the mPFC is also separated into dorsomedial and ventromedial  
107 subregions in rodents, non-human primates and humans (Jobson et al., 2021; Sigurdsson and  
108 Duvarci, 2016). Studies using **tractography and neuroimaging techniques such as diffusion**  
109 **weighted imaging further provide evidence that HPC-mPFC interactions in humans (Bzdok et**  
110 **al., 2013; Croxson, 2005; Godsil et al., 2013; Jobson et al., 2021; Seamans et al., 2008) are**  
111 **similarly observed in rodents (Condé et al., 1995; Eichenbaum, 2017; Ghoshal and Conn,**  
112 **2015; Hoover and Vertes, 2007; Jin and Maren, 2015).** These interactions include prominent  
113 direct (monosynaptic) and indirect (polysynaptic) HPC-mPFC pathways (Eichenbaum, 2017;  
114 Godsil et al., 2013; Jin and Maren, 2015; Sigurdsson and Duvarci, 2016). Here, we provide a  
115 brief anatomical overview of HPC-mPFC connections in Fig. 1.

116 **Insight from rodents (Adhikari et al., 2011; Binder et al., 2019; Eichenbaum, 2017; Hoover and**  
117 **Vertes, 2007), non-human primates (Barbas and Blatt, 1995; Shamy et al., 2010) and humans**  
118 **(Croxson, 2005; Godsil et al., 2013; Li et al., 2015; Preston and Eichenbaum, 2013) reveal**  
119 **monosynaptic projections from the ventral CA1 HPC and subiculum to the mPFC.** Ventral  
120 hippocampal neurons directly innervate three major GABAergic neurons in the mPFC  
121 (parvalbumin-expressing, somatostatin-expressing, and vasoactive intestinal peptide-  
122 expressing interneurons) to support contextual and spatial information (Jin and Maren, 2015).  
123 A monosynaptic projection from the mPFC (predominantly anterior cingulate) to the dorsal  
124 CA3/CA1 HPC is also **identified in mice**, implicated in the regulation of contextual fear memory  
125 generalization (Bian et al., 2019; Rajasethupathy et al., 2015).

126 Several indirect pathways involving the thalamus, lateral entorhinal cortex (LEC) and  
127 amygdala further connect the HPC and mPFC. Rodent studies reveal that the thalamic  
128 nucleus reuniens (NR) is bidirectionally connected to both the mPFC and HPC, and this  
129 pathway is associated with global synchronization and associative learning (Griffin, 2015; Roy  
130 et al., 2017). The lateral entorhinal cortex (LEC) is also bidirectionally connected to both the  
131 mPFC and HPC in rodents (Agster and Burwell, 2009; Eichenbaum, 2017; Isomura et al.,

132 2006; Salimi et al., 2021), and this pathway involving the LEC is implicated in memory  
 133 encoding and retrieval (Eichenbaum, 2017; Takehara-Nishiuchi, 2020). **In rodents**,  
 134 bidirectional projections between the amygdala and both the vHPC and the mPFC are further  
 135 described (Fukushima et al., 2021; Guirado et al., 2016; Hübner et al., 2014; Khastkhodaei et  
 136 al., 2021; Kim and Kim, 2019). These findings implicate that emotion and social behaviours  
 137 may be regulated by HPC-mPFC pathways through the basolateral amygdala (BLA) (Felix-  
 138 Ortiz and Tye, 2014; Felix-Ortiz et al., 2013; Qi et al., 2018), and suggests that the mPFC  
 139 supports the HPC in reconsolidating inhibitory avoidance memory through the amygdala  
 140 (Fukushima et al., 2021).



142 **Figure 1** General schematic of direct and indirect pathways between the hippocampus (HPC)  
 143 and medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC). Insight from rodents (top) and humans (bottom)  
 144 demonstrate that the HPC and mPFC are anatomically connected via direct and indirect  
 145 (bidirectional) pathways. Arrows indicate direction of projections. Direct pathways involve  
 146 monosynaptic projections from the ventral CA1 HPC and subiculum (anterior HPC in humans)  
 147 to the mPFC, and monosynaptic projections from the mPFC (predominantly anterior cingulate)  
 148 to the dorsal CA3/CA1 HPC are reported in rodents. Indirect HPC-mPFC pathways involve  
 149 bidirectional projections between the HPC and mPFC through intermediary regions: the  
 150 thalamic nucleus reuniens (NR), lateral entorhinal cortex (LEC) and amygdala (AMY). For  
 151 details and supporting references, see main text.

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## 154 **Oscillatory Synchrony in the HPC and mPFC**

155 Oscillations are one of the prominent features of brain activity and play a crucial role in regional  
156 neural integration and inter-regional interactions in the brain. Oscillatory activity in groups of  
157 neurons generally arises from feedback connections between the neurons that result in the  
158 synchronization of their firing patterns. The interaction between neurons can give rise to  
159 oscillations at a different frequency than the firing frequency of individual neurons. These  
160 oscillations typically include Delta ( $\delta$ , 2-4 Hz), Theta ( $\theta$ , 5-7 Hz), Alpha ( $\alpha$ , 8-12 Hz), Beta ( $\beta$ ,  
161 15-29 Hz) and Gamma ( $\gamma$ , low: 30-60 Hz and high: 60-100 Hz) (Cole and Voytek, 2017; Thut  
162 et al., 2012). Oscillations have been observed in brain regions including the HPC (Goyal et  
163 al., 2020), visual cortical areas (Galuske et al., 2019), and olfactory cortex (Salimi et al., 2021).  
164 Inter-regional oscillation coupling could modulate effective connectivity in a given behavioural  
165 period, such as while undertaking cognitive tasks, attentional selection and decision making  
166 (Berger et al., 2019; Doesburg et al., 2012; Gordon, 2011; Guise and Shapiro, 2017).  
167 Considerable evidence (Buzsáki and Draguhn, 2004; Goodman et al., 2018; Wirt et al., 2021)  
168 shows that indirect connectivity through HPC-mPFC oscillatory coupling plays a significant  
169 role across different cognitive domains, such as goal-directed behaviour (Womelsdorf et al.,  
170 2010), emotion (Jin and Maren, 2015), context-guided memory (Place et al., 2016), decision-  
171 making (Tamura et al., 2017) and spatial/episodic memory (Brincat and Miller, 2015; Igarashi,  
172 2015; Spellman et al., 2015). Synchrony in different frequency bands may play functionally  
173 different roles in neural communication (Fries, 2005; Buzsáki and Draguhn, 2004). See **Table**  
174 **1**.

175 **(1) HPC-mPFC  $\delta$  oscillation:**  $\delta$ -frequency network activity is commonly associated with  
176 sleep, but data from awake-behaving animals show  $\delta$ -dominated network modes (HPC-mPFC  
177 coupling). Significantly elevated  $\delta$  power can be observed in stationary animals during brief  
178 pauses between running bouts, whereas synchronization in the delta frequency band was  
179 minimal during locomotion. These findings suggest that HPC-mPFC  $\delta$  oscillation represents  
180 functionally distinct circuit dynamics that are temporally and behaviourally alternated among  
181  $\theta$ -dominated oscillations during navigation. This oscillation is vital to coordinating encoding  
182 and retrieval mechanisms or decision-making processes at a timescale that segments event  
183 sequences within behavioural episodes (Schultheiss et al., 2020).

184 **(2) HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  oscillation:** Modulation of mPFC and HPC oscillatory  $\theta$  coupling by  
185 mnemonic demands of a working memory task correlated with behavioural performance both  
186 in animals (Brincat and Miller, 2015; Siapas et al., 2005) and in humans (Anderson et al.,  
187 2010; Kaplan et al., 2014; Backus et al., 2016), and  $\theta$ -modulated rhythmic excitability is  
188 essential for long-term synaptic potentiation (Capocchi et al., 1992) and important for gating  
189 information flow and guiding plastic changes (Siapas et al., 2005). In addition, considerable  
190 evidence demonstrates HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  coupling during spatial navigation when novel  
191 information was encoded and stored information was retrieved (Kaplan et al., 2014). An  
192 increase in HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  coupling also occurs during active choice decision making (Guitart-  
193 Masip et al., 2013) and other memory tasks (Simons and Spiers, 2003).

194 **(3) HPC-mPFC  $\alpha/\beta$  oscillation:** A study from macaques demonstrated that  $\alpha/\beta$ -band  
195 synchrony driven by the HPC increased with learning, leading to the hypothesis that rapid  
196 object associative learning occurs in the PFC, whereas the HPC guides neocortical plasticity  
197 via oscillatory synchrony in  $\alpha/\beta$  (success) or  $\theta$  (failure) bands (Brincat and Miller, 2015).

198 **(4) HPC-mPFC  $\gamma$  oscillation:**  $\gamma$  rhythms have received a great deal of attention due to their  
199 relationship to higher brain functions (Buzsáki and Wang, 2012; Csicsvari et al., 2003).  
200 However, the role of HP-mPFC in synchronous  $\gamma$  activity is less explored.  $\gamma$  coupling between  
201 the HPC and mPFC was reported in relation to working memory (Sigurdsson et al., 2010) and

202 exploratory behaviour during anxiety (Adhikari et al., 2010). As mPFC fast  $\gamma$  oscillations may  
203 be coherent with fast  $\gamma$  in both the HPC and the entorhinal cortex (Colgin et al., 2009), the  
204 entorhinal–hippocampal–mPFC network could therefore coordinate information flow across  
205 these three regions during processing of information related to the external environment  
206 (Colgin, 2011).

207 **(5) HPC-mPFC ripples:** Ripples, discrete bouts of fast oscillations that are strongly associated  
208 with underlying bursts of spiking activity (Buzsáki, 2015), have been implicated in memory  
209 formation, consolidation, and retrieval (Buzsáki, 2015; Joo and Frank, 2018). The identification  
210 of HPC-mPFC ripples coupling with extensive cortico-cortical connections (Khodagholy et al.,  
211 2017), reflected either a direct hippocampal–entorhinal cortex–neocortex excitation  
212 (Logothetis et al., 2012; Peyrache et al., 2011) and/or an indirect common drive by cortical  
213 slow oscillations (Isomura et al., 2006; Sirota et al., 2008). HPC-mPFC ripple association  
214 areas support roles in memory consolidation and links to navigational planning (Khodagholy  
215 et al., 2017).

216 **(6) HPC-mPFC cross frequency:** The cross-frequency coupling of distinct neural oscillations  
217 act as a mechanism for the dynamic co-ordination of brain activity over multiple spatial scales,  
218 with high-frequency activity within local ensembles coupled to large-scale patterns of low-  
219 frequency phase synchrony (Bonfond et al., 2017).

220 Cross-frequency coupling is present during a range of cognitive functions and likely affects  
221 the organization of brain rhythms. Current data demonstrates its crucial role in long-range  
222 cross-frequency coupling in HPC–prefrontal circuit function. Hippocampal  $\theta$  oscillations  
223 modulate mPFC assembly patterns by rhythmically biasing synchrony of local  $\gamma$  oscillations in  
224 behaving rats and mice (Sirota et al., 2008; Tamura et al., 2017), suggesting that oscillations  
225 mediate information flow from the HPC to the PFC. In addition,  $\theta$ - $\delta$  coupling mediates  
226 information transfer from the PFC to the HPC via a relay mechanism through the thalamic NR  
227 (Roy et al., 2017). However, this result has been challenged in light of the possibility that  $\delta$   
228 oscillations has been attributed to respiratory-entrained oscillations in both structures  
229 (Lockmann and Tort, 2018).

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242 **Table 1** The physiological roles of oscillatory synchrony between the hippocampus (HPC) and  
 243 medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC). Relevant studies with recordings from generalized regions  
 244 of the prefrontal cortex and medial temporal lobe are also included in this table. (LFP=local  
 245 field potentials; iEEG= intracranial EEG; MEG=Magnetoencephalography)

Oscillation	Region	Methods Used	Species	Frequency Range	Function	Reference
<b>Delta (<math>\delta</math>)</b>	HPC-mPFC	LFPs	Rat	1-4 Hz	Decision-making	Schultheiss et al., 2020
<b>Theta (<math>\theta</math>)</b>	vHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Mice	4-12 Hz	Anxiety	Adhikari, 2011
	dHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Mice	6-12 Hz	Decision-making	Chang, 2020
	vHPC-mPFC-dHPC	LFPs	Mice	4-2 Hz	Spatial working memory	O'Neill, 2013
	dHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Rat	4-12 Hz	Decision-making	Jones, 2005
	dHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Rat	4-10 Hz	Storage of information	Siapas et al., 2005
	HPC-PFC	LFPs	Rhesus macaques	~2-6 Hz	Working memory	Brincat & Miller, 2015
	MTL-PFC	iEEG	Human	4-8 Hz	Memory	K. L. Anderson et al., 2010
	HPC-mPFC	MEG	Human	3-7 Hz	Integrated memory	Backus et al., 2016
	mPFC-MTL	MEG	Human	4-8 Hz	Spatial memory retrieval	Kaplan et al., 2014
	mPFC-MTL	MEG	Human	4-7 Hz	Dynamic spatial imagery	Kaplan et al., 2017
PFC-MTL	MEG	Human	4-8 Hz	Decision-making	Guitart-Masip et al., 2013	
<b>Alpha/Beta (<math>\alpha/\beta</math>)</b>	PFC-HPC	LFPs	Rhesus macaques	9-16 Hz	Learning	Brincat & Miller, 2015
<b>Gamma (<math>\gamma</math>)</b>	vHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Mice	30-100 Hz	Anxiety	Adhikari, 2011
	dHPC-mPFC	LFPs	Mice	30-80 Hz	Spatial memory	Sigurdsson et al., 2010
<b>Ripples</b>	HPC-mPFC	LFPs	Rat	100-150 Hz	Navigation planning	Khodagholy et al., 2017
<b>Cross-frequency</b>	$\theta$ (dHPC) - $\gamma$ (mPFC)	LFPs	Rats and Mice	$\theta$ (3-5 Hz); $\gamma$ (30-150 Hz)	Information flow	Sirota et al., 2008
	$\theta$ (vHPC) - $\gamma$ (mPFC)	LFPs	Mice	$\theta$ (4-12 Hz); $\gamma$ (30-120 Hz)	Working memory	Tamura et al., 2017
	$\delta$ (mPFC) - $\theta$ (dHPC and vHPC)	LFPs	Rat	$\delta$ (2-5 Hz); $\theta$ (4-8 Hz)	Unknown	Roy, 2017



## 247 **The HPC-mPFC Circuit in Cognition, Emotion and Sensory Processing**

### 248 ***Cognition: Memory and Learning***

249 Important interactions between the HPC and mPFC support the encoding and retrieval of  
250 episodic memories (Eichenbaum, 2017; Jin and Maren, 2015; Kennedy and Shapiro, 2004;  
251 Weilbacher and Gluth, 2017). Considerable evidence demonstrates that in these interactions,  
252 the HPC organizes contextual memory and the mPFC facilitates retrieval of contextual  
253 memories through suppressing inappropriate memories from differing contexts (Eichenbaum,  
254 2017; Preston and Eichenbaum, 2013). Recent functional MRI (fMRI) studies also  
255 demonstrate that persistent HPC-mPFC interactions promote long-term memory through  
256 context-based differentiation (Dugré et al., 2021; Ezzyat et al., 2018). Evidence from rodents  
257 involving paradigms such as the water maze (Vorhees and Williams, 2006), the T-maze  
258 (Deacon and Rawlins, 2006) and spatial win-shift on the radial arm maze (Taylor et al., 2003)  
259 further support the critical role of HPC-mPFC interactions in facilitating the successful  
260 execution of working memory (Liu et al., 2018; Salimi et al., 2022; Sigurdsson and Duvarci,  
261 2016; Wirt et al., 2021). This is further observed in human studies. Increased HPC-mPFC  $\theta$   
262 coherence was predictive of successful memory integration in participants performing an  
263 inference task (Backus et al., 2016), and higher HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  phase synchronization during  
264 encoding of contextually unexpected information was predictive of later memory performance  
265 in epileptic patients (Gruber et al., 2018).

266 Evidence from rodents demonstrate that the HPC-mPFC circuit is crucial for learning. Bilateral  
267 or crossed inactivation of the HPC (dorsal or ventral) or mPFC impaired flexible spatial  
268 learning (Avigan et al., 2020), and increased  $\theta$ -band synchrony between HPC and mPFC  
269 pathways were observed during the transition from retrospective to prospective encoding  
270 (Myroshnychenko et al., 2017). It has also been shown that novel experiences alter vHPC  $\theta$   
271 oscillations and vHPC–mPFC connectivity, subsequently contributing to the modulation of  
272 learning-associated plasticity (Park et al., 2021). This implicates the crucial role of the HPC-  
273 mPFC circuitry in learning-associated circuit plasticity, where it can be primed for subsequent  
274 learning through novelty-induced changes to its circuit connectivity. It has also been shown in  
275 rhesus monkeys that frequency-specific interactions and oscillatory synchrony underlie  
276 relevant points during associative learning, suggesting that oscillatory signals from the HPC  
277 guides neocortical plasticity in the PFC during associative learning (Brincat and Miller, 2015).  
278 Studies in human further suggest that the HPC-mPFC circuit is not only activated and engaged  
279 in interactions with various brain regions to integrate information during new learning, but also  
280 play an important role in higher-level cognition, such as the acquisition of hierarchical concepts  
281 in category learning (Schlichting and Preston, 2016; Theves et al., 2021). Therefore, the HPC-  
282 mPFC circuit plays a crucial role in supporting cognitive processes involving memory and  
283 learning.

284

### 285 ***Emotion***

286 The HPC and mPFC are critically implicated in the neurocircuitry of emotion involving the  
287 contextual modulation of fear (Hartley and Phelps, 2010; Ji and Maren, 2007; Kjelstrup et al.,  
288 2002), emotional judgment (Perry et al., 2011) and emotional memory (Engen and Anderson,  
289 2018; Holland and Kensinger, 2010; Lovett-Barron et al., 2014; Richter-Levin and Akirav,  
290 2000). The mPFC is implicated in the appraisal and expression of negative emotion (dorsal-  
291 caudal mPFC), and regulates limbic regions that facilitate emotional responses (ventral-rostral  
292 mPFC) (Etkin et al., 2011). Increasing evidence suggests that hippocampal-cortical pathways  
293 facilitate the emotional regulation of fear and emotional processing through oscillations (Jin

294 and Maren, 2015; Vertes, 2006). Enhanced ripple- $\delta$ -spindle coupling across the HPC-mPFC  
295 circuit is observed in mice exposed to exogenous acute stress, providing evidence that  
296 emotional encoding is supported by oscillations across this circuit (Lv et al., 2022). These  
297 findings support evidence from human studies that demonstrate the association between  
298 HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  synchronization and anxiety-like behaviour (Khemka et al., 2017; Korn et al.,  
299 2017).

300 There is evidence to suggest that indirect HPC-mPFC pathways modulate emotional  
301 processes such as fear extinction and emotion regulation through circuits involving the  
302 amygdala (Hartley and Phelps, 2010; Jin and Maren, 2015; Ramanathan et al., 2018). The  
303 amygdala is a key structure in fear-conditioning and eliciting emotional states, assigning  
304 emotional dimensions to sensory stimuli through constant evaluation and integration of  
305 arousal states (Kim and Cho, 2020; Ressler and Maren, 2019; Šimić et al., 2021). Insight from  
306 studies using projection tracers and optogenetics in rodents have demonstrated that the  
307 amygdala is anatomically connected to the HPC and mPFC (Hintiryan et al., 2021; Orsini et  
308 al., 2011; Yang and Wang, 2017) and oscillatory synchrony between these regions are  
309 implicated in supporting emotional arousal and consolidation of emotional memories  
310 (Hermans et al., 2014; Paré et al., 2002). Further studies have found increased  $\theta$   
311 synchronization across the vHPC-BLA-mPFC circuit during heightened anxiety and learned  
312 fear expression, suggesting that oscillatory rhythms across this circuit are engaged during  
313 emotional states (Adhikari et al., 2010; Çalışkan and Stork, 2019). These findings are  
314 supported by studies in humans, providing evidence for unidirectional  $\theta$  and  $\alpha$  oscillations in  
315 the amygdala that modulate hippocampal  $\gamma$  activity during fear processing (Zheng et al., 2017),  
316 and synchronization of  $\theta$  oscillations in the amygdala and mPFC to facilitate fear learning  
317 (Chen et al., 2021). Altogether, considerable evidence suggests a neurocircuitry of emotion  
318 regulation that involves the HPC-mPFC circuit via the amygdala (Hartley and Phelps, 2010;  
319 Jin and Maren, 2015; Richter-Levin and Akirav, 2000; Yang and Wang, 2017).

320

### 321 ***Sensory Processing***

322 Sensory processing (SP) plays an important role in daily life as it synthesizes information from  
323 multiple sensory channels in response to the external environment into coherent behavioural  
324 and emotional patterns. **Studies in rodents (Le Merre et al., 2018; Martin-Cortecero and  
325 Nuñez, 2016) and humans (Acevedo et al., 2014; Zucchella et al., 2018) demonstrate the  
326 involvement of a large network of brain areas including the sensory cortices, motor cortices  
327 and associative areas in SP.** Rodent studies further reveal that the HPC and mPFC are  
328 involved in multisensory integration and sensory discrimination (Engel et al., 2012; Grion et  
329 al., 2016; Martin-Cortecero and Nuñez, 2016; Pereira Antonio et al., 2007). Insight from rodent  
330 models of classical eyeblink conditioning further demonstrates that HPC-mPFC pathways can  
331 dynamically modulate SP of conditioned stimulus as part of a secondary modulatory system  
332 (Zhang et al., 2019).

333 The influence of HPC-mPFC pathways on SP is further highlighted in studies where sensory  
334 signals are evaluated for learned motor output. In a study, mice were trained for a whisker-  
335 dependent detection task, and correct “licks” following whisker stimulation correlated with  
336 increased sensory-evoked signals in the dorsal CA1 HPC and mPFC (Le Merre et al., 2018).  
337 Inactivation of neural activity in the HPC and mPFC further impaired behavioural performance,  
338 corroborating studies in contextual learning that demonstrate the crucial role of HPC-mPFC  
339 interactions in translating sensory signals to relevant motor behaviour (Martin-Cortecero and  
340 Nuñez, 2016; Ong et al., 2019), and that HPC-mPFC oscillatory synchrony underlie sensory  
341 gating deficits (Dickerson et al., 2010). **In addition, studies in humans provide evidence that**

342 HPC-mPFC oscillatory synchrony at various frequencies including increased  $\theta$  coherence  
343 supports auditory predictive processing and multisensory attention (Friese et al., 2016;  
344 Grunwald et al., 2003; Recasens et al., 2018). HPC-mPFC interactions are further  
345 demonstrated to be crucial for supporting SP during postnatal development, as the HPC  
346 provides excitatory signals to drive functional mPFC maturation during the sensitive period of  
347 tactile development in rodents (Xu et al., 2020). These include HPC  $\theta$  oscillations that boost  
348 prefrontal oscillations in the neonatal mouse, and the emergence of  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  oscillations during  
349 maturation across the hippocampal-prefrontal network (Ahlbeck et al., 2018; Bitzenhofer et  
350 al., 2017; Brockmann et al., 2011; Xu et al., 2020). Thus, oscillations across the HPC-mPFC  
351 circuitry are not only important for cognition and emotional processes, but also facilitates  
352 normal SP. As rodent studies increasingly implicate the involvement of HPC-mPFC pathways  
353 in modulating SP, future work in humans is warranted to elucidate distinct oscillatory  
354 contributions across the HPC-mPFC network in response to various stimuli.

355

## 356 **The Impact of Abnormal HPC-mPFC Circuit Dynamics in Neurodevelopmental and** 357 **Neurological Disorders**

358 The HPC-mPFC circuit supports cognition, emotion, and sensory processing. These regions  
359 are anatomically and functionally intertwined, and oscillations regulate communication and  
360 information flow to support cognitive and behavioural processes. In this section, we discuss  
361 relevant disorders involving dysfunctional neural dynamics with a focus on the HPC-mPFC  
362 circuit. **See Table 2.**

363

### 364 ***Abnormal HPC-mPFC Circuit Dynamics in Neurodevelopmental Disorders***

365 Abnormal brain development affects the structural and functional connectivity across the HPC-  
366 mPFC circuit, resulting in alteration at different spatial scales from cellular levels to network  
367 level. Neurodevelopmental disorders have been associated with maladaptive formation of  
368 cortical networks and faulty programming of synaptic connections, as neural oscillations and  
369 synchrony may have crucial roles in synaptic modifications (Galuske et al., 2019; Zarnadze et  
370 al., 2016). In this section, we highlight aberrant oscillations within and across the HPC-mPFC  
371 network associated with a variety of cognitive and behavioural deficits in several  
372 neurodevelopmental disorders.

373

#### 374 **Autism Spectrum Disorder**

375 Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by  
376 impairments in memory, executive function, and social skills (Hodges et al., 2020). Disruptions  
377 in oscillatory synchronization are core deficits in ASD, occurring at frequencies involving long  
378 range ( $\delta$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ) and short range ( $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ) connectivity (Simon and Wallace, 2016). Altered neural  
379 circuitries in numerous brain regions including the orbitofrontal and sensory-motor networks  
380 are observed in ASD individuals, suggesting that cortical asynchronization during sensory and  
381 perceptual processing is a pathological hallmark of ASD (Hull et al., 2017; Oldehinkel et al.,  
382 2019; Xu et al., 2019b).

383 To date, only a few studies have focused on HPC-mPFC pathways in ASD. Cytoskeleton  
384 anomalies including fewer dendrites, smaller dendritic processes, and shorter dendritic  
385 processes in pyramidal neurons of the HPC and mPFC are associated with ASD (Barón-  
386 Mendoza et al., 2018). These morphological changes implicate altered synaptic connections,

387 aberrant HPC-mPFC connectivity and contribute to autistic-like behaviours including impaired  
388 social behaviour (Barón-Mendoza et al., 2019). In addition, they affect pyramidal-mediated  
389 excitatory transmission and disturb the balance of excitation/inhibition (E/I) signals that  
390 support social behaviour. A study found reduced  $\theta$  synchronization between the vHPC-mPFC  
391 and loss of excitatory signalling from the vHPC to prefrontal GABAergic interneurons in mice  
392 heterozygous for *Pogz* (high confidence autism gene) with anxiety-related avoidance  
393 behaviour (Cunniff et al., 2020). This corroborates evidence for the crucial role of vHPC-mPFC  
394 in aberrant social behaviour (Sun et al., 2020), where dysfunctional interactions across this  
395 circuit may alter GABAergic circuits and impair long-range communication between the HPC  
396 and mPFC in the pathophysiology of ASD (Nelson and Valakh, 2015; Sohal and Rubenstein,  
397 2019; Zhao et al., 2022).

398 In addition, social deficits associated with hyperactivity of the vHPC-mPFC signalling were  
399 observed and long-term inhibition of mPFC pyramidal neurons rescued social memory deficits  
400 in a mouse model of Rett syndrome (classified as an ASD disorder) (Phillips et al., 2019).  
401 Another study revealed monosynaptic connections from HPC pyramidal neurons to mPFC  
402 GABAergic neurons, and inhibition of this pathway negatively impacted social behaviour in  
403 mice (Sun et al., 2020). Importantly, activation of mPFC parvalbumin-positive (PV+) neurons  
404 rescued social memory impairments caused by inhibition of vHPC (Sun et al., 2020). Deficits  
405 in hippocampal PV+ interneurons, circuit changes (altered  $\gamma$  oscillations, sharp wave-ripples,  
406 and  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  coupling), and impaired spatial discrimination were further found in a mouse model of  
407 ASD, *Cntnap2* mice (Paterno et al., 2021). Altered oscillatory  $\theta$  and  $\alpha$  activity associated with  
408 increased memory load have also been demonstrated in individuals with ASD (Larrain-  
409 Valenzuela et al., 2017). In addition, studies have shown substantially reduced hippocampal  
410 functional connectivity with frontal regions during episodic memory retrieval (Cooper et al.,  
411 2017), as well as rest-associated functional abnormalities in the mPFC correlating with social  
412 impairment in individuals with ASD (Kennedy et al., 2006).

413 These findings from animal models and ASD individuals suggest that ASD phenotypes may  
414 result from HPC cellular and circuit changes that disrupt proper HPC-mPFC communication  
415 during cognitive and behavioural processes (Schmidt and Redish, 2021). Future research  
416 investigating HPC-mPFC interactions will provide insight into the mechanistic links between  
417 aberrant oscillations across the HPC-mPFC network and ASD-associated behaviours.

418

#### 419 Fragile X Syndrome

420 Aberrant HPC-mPFC connectivity is characteristic of Fragile X Syndrome (FXS), the most  
421 common form of inherited disability and leading cause of ASD. FXS develops from a mutation  
422 to the Fragile X mental retardation-1 gene (*FMR1*) located on the X chromosome, resulting in  
423 loss or heavy reduction in the Fragile X Mental Retardation Protein (FMRP). The absence of  
424 FMRP is concurrent with characteristic social impairments, learning disabilities and cognitive  
425 dysfunction including memory dysfunction and abnormal sensory processing (Berzhanskaya  
426 et al., 2016; Ciaccio et al., 2017; Huddleston et al., 2014; Razak et al., 2020). These  
427 impairments have been linked to changes in synaptic plasticity and circuitry involving  
428 excitatory and inhibitory activity in *Fmr1-KO* mice (Gibson et al., 2008; Morin-Parent et al.,  
429 2019; Sidorov et al., 2013; Contractor et al., 2015). Evidence from rodents and humans  
430 suggest that abnormal HPC-mPFC oscillatory dynamics are associated with FXS. Major  
431 electrophysiological observations from recordings in the HPC CA1 pyramidal cell layer  
432 included abnormally greater power of  $\theta$  oscillations associated with increased slow  $\gamma$ , and  
433 decreased spike-count correlations of interneurons hyper-synchronized with  $\theta$  and slow  $\gamma$   
434 oscillations in the FXS mouse model (*Fmr1-KO*) during free exploration (Arbab et al., 2018).

435 In FXS patients, abnormal oscillatory dynamics including enhanced global  $\theta$  connectivity and  
436 reduced  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  connectivity between wider network have been characterized (Molen et al.,  
437 2014). Deficits in social and sensory processing in FXS patients were further correlated with  
438 abnormal oscillatory activity, including increased  $\gamma$  power and  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  coupling (Wang et al., 2017).  
439 This suggests that altered oscillations such as changes to  $\gamma$ , are putative substrates for global  
440 and HPC-mPFC circuit hyper-excitability underlying social deficits in FXS (Arbab et al., 2018;  
441 Goswami et al., 2019; Kozono et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2017).

442 In *Fmr1*-KO mice, changes in mPFC GABAergic signalling were further observed during  
443 crucial time points of postnatal development (Kramvis et al., 2020). At prepubescence, there  
444 was increased inhibition of the mPFC with decreased inhibitory synaptic depression. This  
445 contrasted prolonged synaptic kinetics with reduced inhibition of the mPFC at adolescence,  
446 and dynamic changes to mPFC pathways in *Fmr1*-KO during development is functionally  
447 relevant for downstream impairments (Kramvis et al., 2020). Since the regulation of social  
448 behaviour relies on long-range GABAergic projections from regions such as the vHPC and  
449 basolateral amygdala (BLA) to the mPFC (Yang et al., 2021), these abnormalities reflect an  
450 imbalance in GABAergic signalling persisting throughout development with consequential  
451 phenotypes in FSX (Van der Aa and Kooy, 2020). D'Hulst et al. (D'Hulst et al., 2015)  
452 demonstrated an average of 10% reduction in GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor availability and binding  
453 potential throughout the brain in FXS patients. Using FXS human pluripotent stem cells  
454 (hPSCs), Zhang et al., (Zhang et al., 2022) further found delayed maturation of human  
455 GABAergic neurogenesis in hPSCs, and at later stages of GABAergic neurogenesis, including  
456 (1) increased neuronal networks activity, (2) increased proliferation of neuroblast progenitors  
457 and (3) a downregulation of gene expression associated with neuronal GABAergic maturation.  
458 Thus, a delay in GABAergic neuron differentiation may contribute to recognized deficits in the  
459 GABAergic system in FXS patients (Van der Aa and Kooy, 2020), resulting in altered inhibitory  
460 signals and abnormal homeostatic development of excitatory/inhibitory circuits (Paluszkiwicz  
461 et al., 2011). Consequently, altered local and long-range GABA-dependent HPC-mPFC  
462 interactions expressed in the  $\theta$  and  $\gamma$  ranges (Molen et al., 2014; Wulff et al., 2009; Contractor  
463 et al., 2015) may further lead to impairments in learning (Gao et al., 2018), social behavior  
464 (Black et al., 2021), fear expression (Yang et al., 2021) and working memory (Lanfranchi et  
465 al., 2009). Future work exploring how GABAergic circuit impairments influence oscillations at  
466 various frequency bands across the HPC-mPFC network will provide insight into mechanisms  
467 linking circuit level to behavioural changes in FSX.

468

## 469 Down Syndrome

470 Down syndrome (DS) is a complex genetic disorder characterized by altered HPC and mPFC  
471 neural dynamics associated with cognitive deficits in rodent models (Cramer and Galdzicki,  
472 2012; Witton et al., 2015; Zorrilla de San Martin et al., 2020). We have previously  
473 demonstrated in DS mouse models atypical neural circuitry involving altered  $\theta$  frequency,  
474 altered hippocampal phase-amplitude coupling, modulation of hippocampal high  $\gamma$ , and altered  
475 HPC-mPFC  $\theta$  coherence (Chang et al., 2020). These abnormalities were segregated with  
476 behavioural changes associated with impaired spatial working memory and prolonged  
477 decision-making (Chang et al., 2020). Recent evidence further demonstrates increased  
478 hypersynchrony, altered  $\theta$  oscillations, altered cross-frequency coupling, and reduced HPC  
479 SPW-Rs in the Ts65Dn mouse model of DS (Alemany-González et al., 2020). As HPC SPW-  
480 Rs are coupled to cortical networks including the mPFC to facilitate cognitive processes  
481 (Buzsáki, 2015; Schmidt and Redish, 2021), a reduction in HPC SPW-Rs potentially disrupts  
482 proper communication between the HPC and mPFC to mediate memory impairments and

483 intellectual disabilities (Martin-Cortecero and Nuñez, 2016). These findings suggest that  
484 atypical neural circuitries associated with aberrant HPC-mPFC pathways are important  
485 mechanisms in the pathophysiology of DS (Chang et al., 2020).

486 Abnormal brain synchrony is well established in people with DS. Notably, enhanced  
487 synchronization between adjacent brain regions and widespread alterations in default mode  
488 network (DMN) connectivity including weakened long range connections are largely  
489 characterized (Anderson et al., 2013; Rosas et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2019). Recently,  
490 reduced long-range DMN connectivity associated with cognitive decline were found in DS  
491 individuals, providing evidence that altered connectivity between the HPC and prefrontal  
492 cortices underlie cognitive impairments in DS (DiProspero et al., 2022). In addition, the  
493 attenuation of early exploratory behaviour associated with developmental delays in DS (Fidler  
494 et al., 2019) may be the consequence of abnormal HPC-mPFC interactions. A recent study  
495 demonstrated that direct long-range GABAergic projections from the PFC regulate  
496 disinhibitory HPC microcircuits to facilitate object-related spatial encoding and exploratory  
497 behaviours (Malik et al., 2022). Long-range GABAergic projections promoted network  
498 oscillations that facilitate object exploration such as increased PFC-HPC low- $\gamma$  synchrony and  
499 greater high- $\gamma$  and  $\theta$  power (Malik et al., 2022). These findings implicate that dysfunctional  
500 GABAergic innervation may alter HPC-mPFC oscillatory synchrony and mediate cognitive and  
501 behavioural deficits in DS (Alemany-González et al., 2020; Chang et al., 2020). Therefore,  
502 aberrant HPC-mPFC connectivity may be a potential biomarker predicting clinical conversion  
503 to Alzheimer's Disease (AD) in people with DS (DiProspero et al., 2022; Koenig et al., 2021;  
504 Liang et al., 2020).

505

## 506 ***Abnormal HPC-mPFC Circuit Dynamics in Neurological Disorders***

507 Aging is associated with alterations in cognitive processing and brain neurophysiology.  
508 Studies demonstrate that physiological aging represent a global alteration in oscillation and  
509 disruption of brain functional connectivity (Murty et al., 2020; Rondina et al., 2016).  
510 Pathological changes of synaptic integrity and coordinated network activity has been  
511 associated with neurodegenerative and age-related neural disorders. Recent research further  
512 suggests that altered oscillatory activity in the brain may be an early warning sign of age-  
513 related neurological diseases (Murty et al., 2021). As the HPC and mPFC have well-  
514 established roles in cognitive and memory functions, we discuss relevant age-related  
515 neurological disorders that have aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry.

516

### 517 Alzheimer's Disease

518 Alzheimer's Disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder with widely characterized  
519 abnormalities in neural oscillations and cognitive deficits (Byron et al., 2021; Hamm et al.,  
520 2015; Isla et al., 2021; Kitchigina, 2018). It has been shown that prominent neural HPC-mPFC  
521 oscillations, particularly slow-frequency  $\theta$  and fast-frequency  $\gamma$ , are significantly altered in  
522 mouse models of AD (Kitchigina, 2018; Mehak et al., 2022) and in patients with early and late  
523 stage AD (Başar et al., 2017; Goodman et al., 2018; McDermott et al., 2018). Additionally,  
524 abnormal oscillations across the HPC-mPFC circuit are associated with AD pathology such  
525 as extracellular insoluble  $\beta$ -amyloid ( $A\beta$ ) plaques, intracellular neurofibrillary tangles (NFTs),  
526 and tau aggregation (Ahnaou et al., 2017). A study found that  $A\beta$  significantly reduces synaptic  
527 inputs of hippocampal fibres to the PFC at different frequencies (5–50 Hz) measured by mean  
528 amplitudes of field excitatory postsynaptic potentials (fEPSPs) in vitro (Flores-Martínez and  
529 Peña-Ortega, 2017). Intracranial recordings from the HPC and mPFC of TgF344-AD rats

530 reveal impaired HPC-mPFC  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  coherence and attenuated phase-amplitude coupling  
531 concomitant to A $\beta$  deposition and NFTs (Bazzigaluppi et al., 2018). In tau-expressing rats,  
532 Tanninen and colleagues revealed a significant attenuation of inter-region  $\theta$  and  $\gamma$  phase-  
533 phase and amplitude-amplitude oscillatory coupling between the HPC and prelimbic mPFC  
534 during associative learning (Tanninen et al., 2017). Notably, these changes in neural  
535 oscillations were observed prior to cognitive deficits, implicating oscillatory changes detectable  
536 in preclinical AD. Further evidence from rodents reveal the crucial role of mPFC spindle-band  
537 coupling with hippocampal ripples (Maingret et al., 2016; Zhurakovskaya et al., 2019).

538 The significance of HPC-mPFC in AD is further understood through studies of memory.  
539 Episodic memory is one of the first systems to decline in AD, and affected individuals show  
540 deficits in object and spatial recognition memory consolidation (Tromp et al., 2015). These  
541 processes rely on concurrent activity in the dHPC and mPFC, and chemogenetic inactivation  
542 of these regions impairs memory consolidation in mice (Tuscher et al., 2018). Recent work  
543 demonstrates that CA1 and mPFC  $\theta$  sequences are temporally coordinated to support  
544 memory-guided decision-making processes in rats (Tang et al., 2021), and synchronization of  
545  $\theta$  and  $\gamma$  oscillations regulate HPC-mPFC communication during cognitive processes  
546 particularly learning and memory (Colgin, 2011; Hyman et al., 2005; Wirt et al., 2021; Buzsáki  
547 and Draguhn, 2004). Low levels of  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  coupling associated with working memory deficits are  
548 further reported in patients with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and AD (Abubaker et al.,  
549 2021; Goodman et al., 2018; Kitchigina, 2018). Although it is well established that aberrant  
550 HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics are found in AD, it remains unclear whether oscillatory  
551 abnormalities cause cognitive deficits or are a by-product of cellular changes. Nevertheless,  
552 pathological circuits in AD include abnormal  $\theta$  and  $\gamma$  oscillatory activity across the HPC-mPFC  
553 circuit that leads to impairments in cognition and memory (Mably and Colgin, 2018).

554

## 555 Epilepsy

556 Epilepsy is a common neurological disorder that is characterized by frequent seizures. It  
557 affects nearly 1% of the population with substantial morbidity and mortality (Fiest et al., 2017)  
558 There is increasing interest to study the pathophysiological mechanisms underpinning seizure  
559 generation in epilepsy, particularly abnormal connectivity in certain brain regions (Engel et al.,  
560 2013; Englot et al., 2016; Jiruska et al., 2013). Studies in patients with focal epilepsy showed  
561 widespread network alterations that extend beyond the epileptogenic zone (Braakman et al.,  
562 2013; Luo et al., 2012; Widjaja et al., 2015). In rodent and human studies, altered connectivity  
563 between the HPC and mPFC has been correlated with epilepsy conditions (Englot et al., 2015;  
564 Jin and Maren, 2015). Individuals with temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE) show HPC-mPFC  
565 hypersynchrony and abnormally greater coherence in  $\theta$  bands (Holmes, 2015), suggesting  
566 that epileptiform events are facilitated by the slow oscillation state biasing hippocampal  
567 pathways towards hyperexcitability and enhancing hypersynchrony across HPC and cortical  
568 networks (Nazer and Dickson, 2009). In a rat model of TLE, coherence in  $\theta$  band synchrony  
569 between the dHPC and mPFC was further found to be increased in the pre-ictal period  
570 preceding seizures, suggesting that altered HPC-mPFC connectivity may promote seizure  
571 generation (Broggini et al., 2016).

572 Further evidence revealed that prolonged or recurrent seizures can cause or exacerbate  
573 cognitive impairments (Blake et al., 2000; Butler and Zeman, 2008; Butler et al., 2009).  
574 Numerous studies suggest that altered HPC-mPFC connectivity may be related to  
575 neurocognitive deficits in patients with epilepsy (Doucet et al., 2013; Voets et al., 2014). One  
576 study found fewer physiological hippocampal ripples, greater spontaneous HPC interictal  
577 epileptiform discharges (IEDs), and impaired spatial memory consolidation associated with

578 strongly coupled HPC IEDs-mPFC spindles during sleep and awake states in a rat model of  
579 TLE (Gelinias et al., 2016). In patients with focal epilepsy, the coupling of IEDs with spindles  
580 in regions distinct from the epileptic network were further observed to alter spatiotemporal  
581 oscillatory properties and mediate abnormal patterns of brain connectivity (Dahal et al., 2019).  
582 It is becoming increasingly clear that precisely coordinated HPC IEDs-prefrontal cortex  
583 spindles exacerbate aberrant HPC  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  coupling during rapid eye movement (REM) in the  
584 epileptic brain (Jansen et al., 2021; Mendes et al., 2021). Consequently, the generation of  
585 pathological HPC oscillations and IED-mediated abnormal coupling of oscillations may alter  
586 HPC-mPFC network activity and disrupt normal HPC ripples-mPFC spindles coupling crucial  
587 for supporting memory processes in the epileptic brain (Azimi et al., 2021; Mendes et al., 2021;  
588 Siapas and Wilson, 1998; Xia et al., 2017). Overall, connectivity studies in epilepsy are critical  
589 endeavours that may lead to improved strategies for localization epileptogenic area, aid  
590 surgical intervention and facilitate outcome prediction in epilepsy.

591

## 592 **Therapeutic Strategies for Targeting HPC-mPFC Circuit Dynamics**

593 Medical treatments and neural substrates for therapeutic approaches can be guided by the  
594 study of brain oscillations. Oscillotherapeutics is an exciting area of therapy that uses  
595 oscillations as biomarkers or therapeutic targets to treat disorders with brain network  
596 dysfunction (Takeuchi and Berényi, 2020). Here, we discuss advancements in brain  
597 stimulation, gene therapy, and pharmacotherapy, highlighting evidence for the use of  
598 oscillotherapeutics to treat disorders with aberrant HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics.

599

### 600 ***Brain Stimulation***

601 An emerging application in brain stimulation therapy is the use of neuromodulation to restore  
602 network abnormalities in cognitive disorders such as AD (Chan et al., 2021a). Methods include  
603 non-invasive and invasive approaches that stimulate the brain at targeted sites to restore  
604 balance of neural circuits via manipulation of oscillatory activity in local and network-wide  
605 activity. In this section, we highlight Non-invasive Gamma Entrainment Using Sensory  
606 Stimulation (GENUS) and deep brain stimulation (DBS) as promising approaches in disorders  
607 with aberrant neural oscillations.

608 Since  $\gamma$  brain activity has well-established roles in cognition,  $\gamma$  entrainment therapy has been  
609 explored for neurological disorders such as AD (Adaikkan and Tsai, 2020; Traikapi and  
610 Konstantinou, 2021). Visual GENUS at 40 Hz entrained  $\gamma$  oscillatory activity in the HPC and  
611 prefrontal cortices and enhanced inter-regional  $\gamma$  oscillatory activity in mouse models of  
612 neurodegeneration (Adaikkan and Tsai, 2020; Adaikkan et al., 2019). Auditory and audiovisual  
613 GENUS at 40 Hz further reduced amyloid load in the HPC and mPFC respectively, and  
614 hippocampal-dependent recognition and spatial memory tasks were also improved by auditory  
615 GENUS at 40 Hz in the neurodegeneration mouse model, 5XFAD mice (Martorell et al., 2019).  
616 These findings demonstrate the potential for GENUS to ameliorate AD pathology and improve  
617 cognitive function (Iaccarino et al., 2016).

618 Preliminary data from human studies highlights its potential application in treatment for AD.  
619 Chan et al. (Chan et al., 2021b) conducted a randomized, placebo-controlled trial in  
620 participants with mild AD dementia and found that one-hour daily treatment of audio-visual  
621 GENUS at 40 Hz delivered over 3 months improved memory performance and reduced brain  
622 atrophy in the active group. Fatemi et al. (2022) employed simultaneous auditory and visual  
623 stimulation in cognitive healthy participants and found significantly enhanced  $\theta$ - $\gamma$  phase-



624 amplitude coupling (PAC). This corroborates evidence for GENUS as a potential treatment for  
625 AD, as it may be able to correct abnormal oscillations across the HPC-mPFC circuitry and  
626 restore cognitive functions (Belluscio et al., 2012; Chan et al., 2021b; Fatemi et al., 2021;  
627 Lisman & Jensen, 2013; Tort et al., 2009).

628 The application of DBS to target HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics is based on the hypothesis that  
629 DBS can modulate oscillations in these regions (Cervera-Ferri et al., 2016; Muthuraman et al.,  
630 2020; Zhu et al., 2019). DBS therapy is a neurosurgical intervention where electrical activity  
631 is constantly or intermittently delivered to the brain through electrodes. The ability for DBS to  
632 modulate oscillatory rhythms is actively explored in diseases with pathological brain circuitries  
633 (Herrington et al., 2016; Lozano et al., 2019). DBS of the subthalamic nucleus (STN) and  
634 globus pallidus interna (GPi) was shown to effectively reduce pathological  $\beta$  band activity (13-  
635 30 Hz) in the corticothalamic-basal ganglia network responsible for hallmark Parkinsonian  
636 rhythms (Müller and Robinson, 2018). Central thalamus-DBS (CT-DBS) increased  
637 hippocampal  $\theta$  oscillations and improved SWM in SD rats (Chang et al., 2019), and ventral  
638 internal capsule/ventral striatum DBS therapy increased mPFC  $\theta$  oscillations and improved  
639 cognitive control in human subjects with MDD Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (Widge et al.,  
640 2019). Recent work further demonstrated that acute DBS in the mPFC with 130 Hz improved  
641 mPFC-vHPC  $\theta$  and  $\gamma$  coupling in a rat model of developmental schizophrenia (Lippmann et  
642 al., 2021).

643 Insight from DBS for epilepsy further implicates its beneficial impact in treating disorders with  
644 pathological neural circuitries (Laxpati et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2021). Recent evidence found  
645 that DBS in the medial septum entrained the hippocampal  $\theta$  rhythm to facilitate anti-seizure  
646 effects in patients with temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE), (Wang et al., 2021). In another large,  
647 prospective double-blind study, HPC-DBS significantly reduced seizures in patients with  
648 refractory TLE, and 50% of these patients became seizure-free 8 months post-surgery (Cukiert  
649 et al., 2017). Given that prominent oscillations regulate communication between the HPC and  
650 mPFC, the ability for DBS to entrain oscillations in the HPC may restore normal HPC-mPFC  
651 oscillatory coupling disturbed in neurological disorders with global network dysfunction such  
652 as epilepsy. With increasing evidence that IED-spindle coupling is associated with aberrant  
653 hippocampal-cortical connectivity in epilepsy, future work using DBS to restore physiological  
654 HPC ripple-mPFC spindles may improve cognitive deficits found in patients with epilepsy.  
655 Further studies examining the ability for DBS to alter HPC-mPFC oscillations at different  
656 frequencies will significantly contribute to advancing progress in using DBS to treat  
657 neurological disorders with aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry.

658

### 659 **Gene Therapy**

660 The use of gene therapy to modulate HPC-mPFC circuit dynamic is a relatively new area of  
661 research. However, preliminary findings from clinical trials suggest that gene therapy can  
662 target diseases like AD that have aberrant neural circuitries. There are over 40 ongoing clinical  
663 trials in treatment for neurodegenerative diseases (Sun and Roy, 2021) and for example,  
664 currently, much optimism surrounds the Phase 1 clinical trial of the AAV2-Brain Derived Nerve  
665 Growth Factor (BDNF) gene therapy to treat AD or MCI (National Institute of Health (NIH),  
666 NCT05040217). Since BDNF regulates key memory circuits involving the HPC and mPFC  
667 (Rosas-Vidal et al., 2014), AAV2-BDNF gene therapy represents a promising therapeutic  
668 approach to treating neurodegenerative diseases like AD by targeting the modulation of  
669 synaptic signalling (Gao et al., 2022); National Institute of Health (NIH), NCT05040217). A  
670 recent study further demonstrated that SynCav1 gene therapy may also be a promising  
671 therapy for AD. First, the authors demonstrated that PSAPP AD model mice at 9 and 11

672 months of age exhibited deficits in caveolin-1 (Cav-1), a protein essential for synaptic and  
673 neuroplasticity and associated learning and memory impairments (Wang et al., 2021). Then,  
674 they found that delivery of SynCav1 to the HPC at 3 months using adeno-associated virus  
675 serotype 9 (AAV9) improved memory and improved morphological changes including a  
676 greater number of CA1 dendritic spines and dendritic arborization which support important  
677 rhythms like  $\theta$  in the HPC-mPFC circuit (Nuñez and Buño, 2021; Wang et al., 2021).  
678 Interestingly, these effects were seen without the reduction of amyloid deposits and implicates  
679 the role of this novel gene therapy for later stages of neurodegeneration where there may be  
680 high levels of amyloid deposition (Wang et al., 2021).

681 The application of gene therapy for neural circuit disorders is further highlighted in its potential  
682 to treat developmental disorders with heritable components (Mirzayi et al., 2022; Sahin and  
683 Sur, 2015; Sternson and Bleakman, 2020). There is increasing evidence that gene therapy  
684 technologies including chemogenetics (Sternson and Bleakman, 2020), optogenetics (Mirzayi  
685 et al., 2022) and CRISPR-based gene editing (Heidenreich and Zhang, 2016) are viable tools  
686 for dissecting and restoring neuronal circuits fundamental to developmental and neurological  
687 diseases. In a recent study, adeno-associated viruses (AAV)-mediated expression of human  
688 FMRP isoform 17 orthologs corrected abnormal  $\gamma$  activity and autism-related behaviours in  
689 *Fmr1* KO rodents (Hooper et al., 2021), and AAV-FMRP-injected mice demonstrated the ability  
690 to restore cellular expression in hippocampal and cortical neurons to 50% WT levels 56 days  
691 after injection (Gholizadeh et al., 2014). These findings implicate the potential for gene therapy  
692 to restore cellular changes (e.g. GABAergic deficits) and correct circuit imbalances (neuronal  
693 hyperexcitability) associated with learning disabilities, sensory hypersensitivities, and social  
694 deficits in FXS and other neurodevelopmental disorders (Bülow et al., 2022; Contractor et al.,  
695 2015). As of now, the efficacy of gene therapy in restoring abnormal HPC-mPFC circuitry  
696 remains unclear and clinical trials are warranted. Future work to improve gene delivery and  
697 increase understanding of post-transcriptional regulation systems will further optimize gene  
698 therapy to correct aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry associated with developmental and  
699 neurological disorders (Ingusci et al., 2019).

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## 701 **Pharmacotherapy**

702 In pharmacotherapy for AD, there is an emerging paradigm shift from solely targeting  
703 pathological hallmarks like amyloid plaques to modulating neural circuitries. Considerable  
704 evidence demonstrates that critical oscillatory rhythms ( $\theta$  and  $\gamma$ ) supporting memory  
705 processes are altered from early stages of AD (Başar et al., 2016; Grunwald et al., 2001;  
706 Traikapi and Konstantinou, 2021). Several AD drugs have been shown to modulate these  
707 rhythms (Isla et al., 2021). Notably, the AChE inhibitor donepezil was found to increase  
708 stimulation-induced hippocampal  $\theta$  oscillation power, enhance  $\theta$  phase to  $\gamma$  amplitude  
709 coupling, reduce cortical hyperexcitability and reduce occurrences of high-voltage spindle  
710 activity in a transgenic AD mouse model (Stoiljkovic et al., 2018). In addition, current drugs  
711 approved for the symptomatic treatment of dementia (rivastigmine, tacrine, galantamine and  
712 memantine) have been shown to enhance cortical slow  $\theta$  (4.5-6 Hz) and  $\gamma$  (30.5-50 Hz)  
713 oscillations (Ahnaou et al., 2014; Drinkenburg et al., 2015). Recently, the histone deacetylase  
714 inhibitor (HDAC) suberoylanilide hydroxamic acid (SAHA), was found to rescue impairment of  
715 hippocampal  $\gamma$  (20-40 Hz) oscillations and restore activity of fast spiking interneurons in basal  
716 and active states in a model of AD (PSAPP transgenic mice) (Takasu et al., 2021). These  
717 findings implicate the ability for SAHA to modulate hippocampal  $\gamma$  oscillations through its effect  
718 on fast-spiking PV+ GABA-containing interneurons (Bartos et al., 2007). Since PV+  
719 interneurons mediate crucial HPC-mPFC interactions underlying memory consolidation

720 (ripple-spindle oscillatory coupling) (Xia et al., 2017), SAHA represents the crucial role of  
721 pharmacotherapies in targeting HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics for treating cognitive  
722 impairments in AD.

723 The potential for pharmacotherapies to modulate aberrant HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics is  
724 further implicated in treatment for schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a complex disorder  
725 associated with significant abnormal neuronal synchrony and impairments in spatial and  
726 temporal integration of brain network activity (Başar et al., 2016; Orellana and Slachevsky,  
727 2013; Rame et al., 2017; Uhlhaas and Singer, 2010). The “pharmaco-EEG” approach has  
728 been used in schizophrenia therapy to study and predict clinical efficacy of drugs through EEG  
729 parameters (Drinkenburg et al., 2015; Galderisi, 2002). Recently, Cariprazine (United States:  
730 Vraylar; Europe: Reagila), a third-generation antipsychotic approved for the treatment of  
731 schizophrenia (Stępnicki et al., 2018), demonstrated evidence for stabilizing the aberrant  
732 increase and accelerating the resynchronization of hippocampal  $\gamma$  oscillations in a rat model  
733 of acute first-episode schizophrenia (MK-801) (Meier et al., 2020). Clozapine have also shown  
734 efficacy in restoring hippocampal-prefrontal cortical synaptic plasticity and augmenting long-  
735 term potentiation in the HPC-mPFC pathway via dopaminergic modulation in animal models  
736 of schizophrenia (Matsumoto et al., 2008; Rame et al., 2017; Ruggiero et al., 2021). The  
737 development of effective pharmacotherapies that restore aberrant neural dynamics is a  
738 growing and important area of research. Abnormal neural synchrony significantly contributes  
739 to various pathologies, and further advancements in pharmacotherapies should consider  
740 targeting neural circuitries in treatment, particularly in diseases with prominent aberrant HPC-  
741 mPFC circuit dynamics like AD and schizophrenia to restore normal function (Canter et al.,  
742 2016).

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760 **Table 2** Overview of neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders associated with  
761 abnormal hippocampus-medial prefrontal cortex circuit dynamics. For a more thorough  
762 discussion, refer to text. (AD=Alzheimer's Disease; dHPC=dorsal hippocampus;  
763 DMN=default mode network; HPC=hippocampus; HPC-mPFC=hippocampal-medial  
764 prefrontal cortex; human pluripotent stem cells=hPSCs; interictal epileptiform  
765 discharges=IEDs; MCI=mild cognitive impairment; mPFC=medial prefrontal cortex;  
766 PV+=parvalbumin-positive; SPW-Rs=sharp wave-ripples; vHPC=ventral hippocampus)  
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Category	Disorder	Species	Relevant Findings	Reference
Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Rodent	Dendritic changes in the HPC and mPFC pyramidal neurons.	(Barón-Mendoza et al., 2018, 2019)
		Rodent	(1) Reduced $\theta$ synchronization between the vHPC and mPFC. (2) Loss of excitatory signalling from the vHPC to prefrontal GABAergic interneurons.	(Cunniff et al., 2020)
		Rodent	Hyperactivity of vHPC to mPFC projections impaired social memory.	(Phillips et al., 2019)
		Rodent	Altered mPFC GABAergic innervation from vHPC negatively impacted social behaviour.	(Sun et al., 2020)
		Rodent and Human	Dysfunctional sensory oscillations at frequency ranges associated with long range ( $\delta$ , $\theta$ , $\alpha$ , $\beta$ ) and short range ( $\beta$ , $\gamma$ ) connectivity.	(Simon and Wallace, 2016)
		Rodent and Human	Impaired $\theta$ and $\alpha$ oscillatory activity associated with working memory deficits.	(Larrain-Valenzuela et al., 2017)
		Human	Altered short- and long-range (hippocampal-frontal cortices) connectivity.	(Hull et al., 2017; Oldehinkel et al., 2019)

Fragile X Syndrome	Rodent and Human	Altered GABAergic signalling due to dysfunctional vHPC-mPFC long-range GABAergic projections crucial for regulating social behaviour.	(Kramvis et al., 2020; Van der Aa and Kooy, 2020; Yang et al., 2021)
	Rodent	Oscillatory changes in the HPC that potentially disrupts HPC-mPFC circuitry:  (1) Abnormally greater power of $\theta$ associated with increased slow $\gamma$ . (2) Decreased spike-count correlations of interneurons hyper-synchronized with $\theta$ and slow $\gamma$ .	(Arbab et al., 2018)
	Human	Evidence suggesting impaired GABAergic HPC-mPFC signalling in FXS patients:  (1) A 10% reduction in GABA <sub>A</sub> receptor availability. (2) Reduced GABA binding potential throughout the brain.	(D'Hulst et al., 2015)
	Human	Evidence suggesting impaired HPC-mPFC local and long-range GABA-dependent interactions:  (1) Delayed maturation of GABAergic neurogenesis in hPSCs (2) Increased neuronal networks activity. (3) Increased proliferation of	(Zhang et al., 2022)

			neuroblast progenitors. (4) Downregulation of proteins associated with GABAergic neuronal maturation.	
Down Syndrome	Rodent	Altered HPC-mPFC neural dynamics:  (1) $\theta$ frequency (2) HPC phase-amplitude coupling (3) modulation of HPC high $\gamma$ (4) $\theta$ coherence	(Chang et al., 2020)	
	Rodent	Reduced HPC SPW-Rs coupling with cortical networks and impaired working memory.	(Alemany-González et al., 2020)	
	Rodent	Altered GABAergic signalling; loss of fast-spiking phenotypic PV+ cells and increased excitability.	(Zorrilla de San Martin et al., 2020)	
	Rodent and Human	Abnormal coordination of $\theta$ oscillatory activity across the HPC and mPFC.	(Goodman et al., 2018; Wirt et al., 2021)	
	Human	Widespread alterations in DMN connectivity and weakened DMN-frontal cortices connectivity	(Anderson et al., 2013; Wilson et al., 2019)	
	Human	Reduced long-range hippocampal-prefrontal connectivity associated with cognitive decline in people with DS converting to AD.	(DiProspero et al., 2022)	

Neurological Disorders	Alzheimer's Disease	Rodent and Human	Abnormal mPFC spindle-band coupling with HPC ripples.	(Maingret et al., 2016; Zhurakovskaya et al., 2019)
		Rodent	Inactivation of the dHPC and mPFC impaired object and spatial recognition memory consolidation.	(Tuscher et al., 2018)
		Rodent	Altered CA1 HPC-mPFC $\theta$ temporal synchronization.	(Tang et al., 2021)
		Rodent	HPC-mPFC hypersynchrony associated with cognitive impairments.	(Holmes, 2015)
		Human	Reduced $\theta$ - $\gamma$ coupling associated with working memory deficits in patients with MCI and AD.	(Abubaker et al., 2021; Goodman et al., 2018; Kitchigina, 2018)
	Epilepsy	Rodent	Increased coherence at $\theta$ band synchrony between the dHPC and mPFC in pre-ictal seizure periods.	(Broggini et al., 2016)
		Rodent and Human	Altered hippocampal-cortical coupling:  (1) Aberrant HPC IEDs induce mPFC spindles. (2) Degree of HPC IEDs-mPFC spindles coupling correlated with memory impairments.	(Gelinas et al., 2016; Mendes et al., 2021)
		Rodent and Human	Increased HPC-mPFC $\theta$ asynchrony and atypical $\gamma$ oscillations associated with cognitive impairments.	(Bowie and Harvey, 2006; Chang et al., 2019; Choi et al., 2016; Skirzewski et al., 2018)

769 **Conclusion**

770 Considerable evidence from neuroanatomical and physiological studies demonstrates that the  
771 HPC and mPFC are anatomically and functionally intertwined. The HPC-mPFC circuit includes  
772 direct and indirect pathways that have well-established roles in supporting cognitive, emotional  
773 and sensory processes. For example, critical HPC-mPFC oscillatory rhythms facilitate  
774 episodic memory and spatial memory, persistent HPC-mPFC interactions promote long-term  
775 memory through context-based differentiation, and emotional processes are closely  
776 associated with oscillatory coupling of the HPC and BLA receiving direct projections from the  
777 mPFC. In this review, we have highlighted several neurodevelopmental (ASD, DS, FXS) and  
778 neurological disorders (AD, epilepsy) with altered HPC-mPFC circuit dynamics. Since  
779 oscillations across the HPC-mPFC circuit are crucial for supporting cognitive and behavioural  
780 functions, oscillotherapeutics that modulate pathological brain rhythms in neurodevelopmental  
781 and neurological disorders should be thoroughly explored (Földi et al., 2021; Widge et al.,  
782 2019; Traikapi and Konstantinou, 2021; Takeuchi and Berényi, 2020). However, the current  
783 body of research on oscillotherapeutics for abnormal HPC-mPFC circuitry is limited by the  
784 use of singular modalities (Liang and Mody, 2022). Since EEG and MEG presents with spatial  
785 resolution limitations, it is difficult to pinpoint sources of abnormal neural circuitry. Future  
786 research should employ multimodal imaging, combining EEG, MEG, and fMRI to better  
787 integrate spatial and temporal information of aberrant circuitries underlying disorders such as  
788 AD with cognitive and behavioural deficits. Furthermore, disorders such as ASD with  
789 heterogeneous pathophysiology makes it difficult to assess the extent by which aberrant  
790 oscillations contribute to cognitive/behavioural deficits. This can be improved by disease  
791 stratification (genetics and behavioural) and breaking down heterogenous disorders into  
792 smaller parts, making it easier to investigate oscillatory dynamics associated with specific  
793 phenotypes. In conclusion, oscillatory dynamics across the HPC-mPFC circuit could be useful  
794 biomarkers for assessing interventions in neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders,  
795 and advancements in brain stimulation, gene therapy and pharmacotherapy will accelerate  
796 effective treatments for various disorders with aberrant HPC-mPFC circuitry.

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