

The IMID Study**Understanding the effects of stress, anxiety, depression and chronic disease****Welcome!****Did you know?**

- The first day of the winter solstice last year was December 21, 2017
- St. Lucia's Day is a festival of lights. The festival is celebrated in Scandinavia around the time of the winter solstice. It is also celebrated in Italy.
- In Nome, Alaska, there are only four hours of daylight on the solstice.
- The largest snowflake ever found was 15 inches wide and fell in Fort Keogh, Montana in 1887.

Welcome to the fourth edition of the IMID study newsletter!

We hope that you enjoyed the recent holiday season.

In this edition of the newsletter we will share some preliminary findings about thinking and memory among IBD participants. We also share some re-

search findings from another aspect of the study.

We will also introduce two other members of our research team.

We hope you enjoy it.

Study progress...

By the end of November 2017, the 964 participants enrolled in this study will have:

- Participated in more than 2,900 VISITS
- Completed more than 31,000 QUESTIONNAIRES
- The information you have provided has made important contributions to our understanding of anxiety and depression, particularly in IBD, MS and RA. See page 4 for findings of one of these studies.
- The earliest participants in the study will be starting their final visits—THANK YOU!

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Depression and anxiety disorders may develop before diagnosis of IBD, MS and RA

What was the question?

Using anonymous health service use information for Manitoba residents, we looked at the occurrence of depression and anxiety disorders in people with IBD, MS and RA.

Who did we study?

We compared people with any one of these immune conditions (the “IMID” group) to people of the same age and sex without IBD, MS or RA (the “matched” group). We found 12,141 Manitobans with an IMID and 65,424

without an IMID.

What did we look at?

We looked for new diagnoses of depression or anxiety disorder in the 5 year period before the IMID was first diagnosed.

What did we find?

First, people in the IMID group were more likely to be newly diagnosed with depression or anxiety disorders compared to people without an IMID.

Second, new diagnoses of depression & new diagnoses anxiety disorder were most common in the year in which the IMID was diagnosed.

Third, New diagnoses of depres-

sion (to the left) & new diagnoses of anxiety disorder (below) occurred more often in the IMID group than the matched group as early as 5 years before the diagnosis of the IMID.

What does it mean?

There may common causes of depression, anxiety disorders and IMID such as IBD, MS & RA.

These findings also suggest that it is important to provide support to people with IBD, MS and RA who are dealing with stress, anxiety and depression.



Meet the research team: Dr. Renee El-Gabalawy

Where are you from?

...New Brunswick, but I grew up in Manitoba. Now I am an Assistant Professor in the Departments of Clinical Health Psychology and Anesthesia & Perioperative Medicine at the University of Manitoba.

What do you hope to

learn from this study?

...I am excited about better understanding the relationship between anxiety and trauma-related disorders and inflammatory conditions, particularly rheumatoid arthritis. I hope learn about factors related to improving care for people

with mental and physical health conditions.

What other research are you involved in?

My research aims at understanding anxiety and trauma-related disorders related to major health events such as major surgery and chronic pain.



Renee El-Gabalawy, PhD

Meet the research team: Christiane Whitehouse, PhD student

Where are you from?

... Born and raised in the Maritimes outside of Halifax.

What are you studying?

I am currently completing my PhD in clinical psychology, specializing in neuropsychology. Neuropsychology looks at the relationship between our brain and our thinking abilities (such as memory).

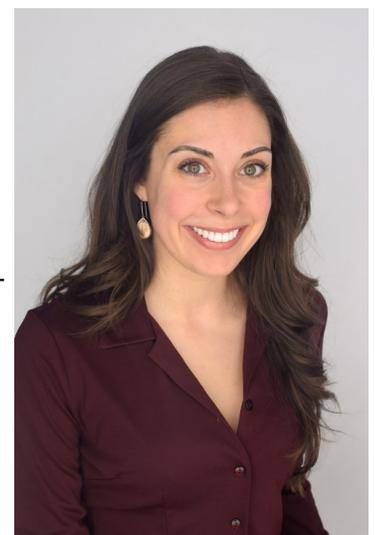
What other research are you involved in?

In addition to this study, I am involved with research in Nova Scotia taking place at an MS Clinic.

We are interested in how thinking abilities (such as memory and the ability to pay attention) are affected in people living with MS, and whether we can

predict who will go on to develop problems with these thinking abilities in the future.

I am also doing similar work with people who have experienced a stroke or traumatic brain injury.



Christiane Whitehouse, BSc

Findings on Cognitive Function in the IMID Study: Christiane Whitehouse

What question were you trying to answer?

I wanted to look at the relationship of symptoms of anxiety and depression on cognition (e.g. memory, attention). Specifically, I wanted to learn if the effects of depression and anxiety on cognition were different in people with IBD, MS, and RA, and people without any of these conditions.

What aspects of cognition did you look at?

I looked at several areas including processing

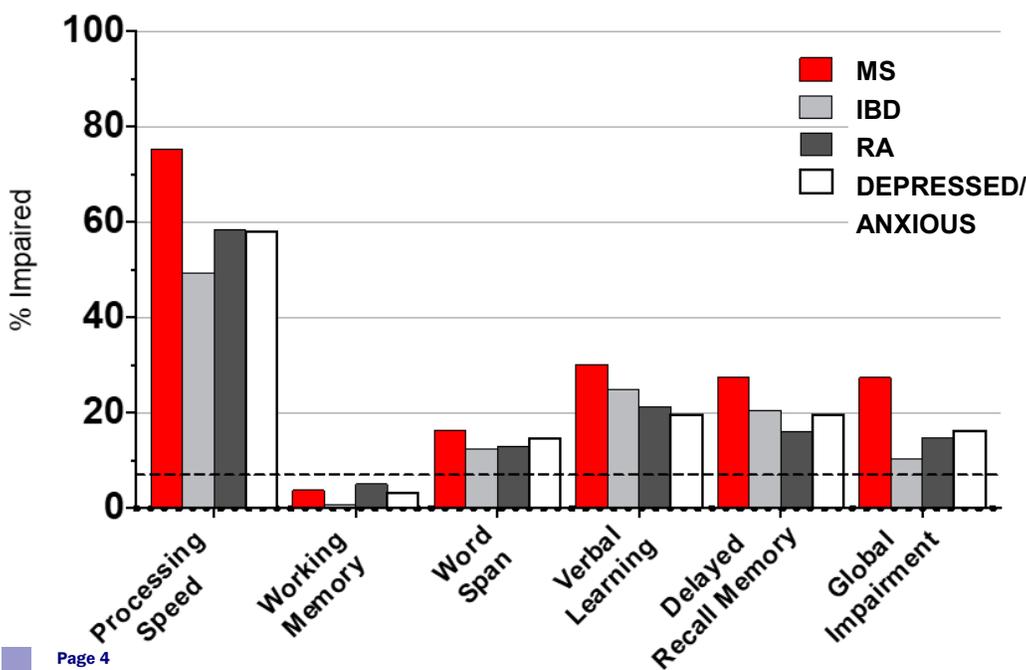
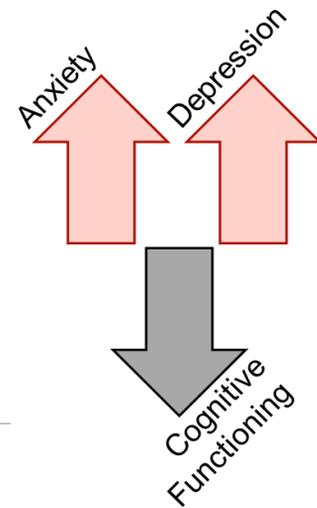
speed (how quickly people do a mental task), working memory (the ability to remember and use relevant information while doing an activity), and verbal learning.

What did you find?

About 5% of the population would be expected to have low scores on cognitive tests (dotted line in figure below). People with MS had more difficulty with cognition than the other groups. This was consistent with what we know about the effects of MS on the

brain. We also found that more people with IBD & RA, depression & anxiety had more difficulties than expected. The findings about people with IBD & RA have not been explored in detail in previous research.

In all groups, greater symptoms of anxiety and depression were associated with greater difficulties with processing speed.



Yoga to help with stress and mood?

Researchers in Sweden & the United States reviewed published clinical trials that had tested the effects of yoga on stress and mood. Pascoe *et al.* J Psychiatric Research 2015;68:270-282

What are the principles of yoga?

All forms of yoga have common features. These include: controlled breathing, use of physical postures, and use of meditative techniques.

What studies did they find?

They identified 24 randomized controlled trials which tested a yoga-based intervention. To be included the studies had to include biological measures of stress which would help to explain why yoga could have beneficial effects on mood.

Some of the studies enrolled healthy volunteers. Others enrolled people with chronic medical conditions.

What did the studies show?

The authors concluded that the studies provided preliminary evidence that yoga reduced levels of cortisol (a “stress” hormone), reduced activation of the sympathetic nervous system (), decreased stress and improved mood. The benefits seemed to be higher if more hours of yoga were practiced. More studies are needed to fully understand the biological effects of yoga.



Research Study Coordinators

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Have suggestions for the newsletter? Feel free to contact us. If your contact information changes, please let us know.

Thanks for your continued participation !

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Happy New Year!

Time to look forward to spring.....

