

BBRF Grants are Making a Difference

Research supported by BBRF grants is playing a vital role on some of the most important fronts in the fight against mental illness

The First Rapid-Acting Antidepressants

In 2019, the FDA approved esketamine, the first-ever rapid-acting antidepressant for patients with treatment-resistant depression, and brexanolone, which can lift postpartum depression within 48 hours. 90 BBRF grants over 20 years helped build the foundation for these long-sought advances.

Non-Invasive Brain Stimulation to Treat Depression, OCD, PTSD

BBRF grants seeded research which led to FDA approval in 2008 of rTMS (repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation) for treatment-resistant major depression. BBRF grantees are now testing more powerful and faster-acting brain-stimulation technologies with a wide range of potential applications.

Computer-Guided Cognitive Remediation for Enhanced Recovery in Schizophrenia

Recovery may be possible for more people with schizophrenia and other disorders in which cognitive function is impaired, including bipolar disorder and depression. Recently, BBRF-funded scientists have clinically validated computer-guided methods of enhancing verbal and auditory learning capacity, processing speed, working memory, and recall ability in chronic schizophrenia patients.

Lowering the Child's Mental Illness Risk via Maternal Choline Supplements

BBRF grantees have pioneered choline supplementation in the diet of pregnant women to reduce the risk of mental illness in children. Today, the American Medical Association recommends including choline in prenatal vitamin supplements.

Harnessing Stem Cell Technology to Study Autism, Schizophrenia

BBRF grantees have pioneered the use of stem-cell technologies to create functioning brain "organoids"—living test-beds that can be used to assess new drug candidates as well as reveal how genetic variations cause pathologies in the fetal brain as it develops. This research is especially pertinent in autism, schizophrenia and other disorders with developmental roots.

Computer-Guided Early Diagnosis of Mental Illness

BBRF-funded investigators are training machines that, in turn, train themselves—ultimately, to a level of precision not possible in humans—to recognize potentially diagnostic patterns of clinical data or biological markers in schizophrenia, first-episode psychosis, major depression, and bipolar disorder.