Early androgen exposure and human gender development

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https://weillcornell.zoom.us/j/92812036154
Meeting ID: 928 1203 6154
Password: 12345

Abstract:
Androgenic hormones influence neurobehavioral development during sensitive periods of prenatal or neonatal life. Thousands of experimental studies of non-human mammals document these influences. Studies of people with genetic syndromes that cause unusual androgen exposure suggest similar influences on human development. For instance, girls and women exposed to high concentrations of androgens prenatally because they have congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) show increased male-typical childhood play behavior, reduced identification with female gender assignment and reduced heterosexual interest. Similarly, the behavior of XY females who experience no effective androgen exposure because of complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (CAIS) generally show female-typical behavior. Normal variability in early androgen exposure also relates to later childhood play with higher androgen exposure predicting increased male-typical behavior. Other evidence suggests that androgenic influences work with social and cognitive influences to shape gendered outcomes. Melissa was educated at Princeton University (BA) and at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) (PhD). Funders of her research include the United States Public Health Service, the United Kingdom Economic and Social Research Council, and the Wellcome Trust.

Learning Objectives:
1. Discuss how human gender development involves multiple psychological and behavioral characteristics (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, childhood play behavior, cognition, personality, psychiatric diagnoses).
2. Describe how early (prenatal / neonatal) androgen exposure contributes to some, but not all, gender related characteristics.
3. Discuss how early androgen exposure acts with other factors (e.g., postnatal socialisation, culture) in different ways to influence specific gender related characteristics.

References:

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