

Lay summary: Gut microbiota and immune system alterations in children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD): Implications for mental health

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Prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) can predispose the individual to a myriad of health-related conditions, including mental health problems (e.g., depression/anxiety) and immune system dysfunction over the life course. In the current project we will investigate whether altered gut microbiota (bacteria) composition, which is known to increase inflammation, underlies the increased susceptibility to mental health problems seen in individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). Elucidation of the mechanisms underlying risk for and resilience to mental health problems is critical for improving early intervention strategies and long-term health and well-being for individuals with FASD.