

Apathy and Impulsivity in neurodegenerative conditions



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Learning objectives

- There is a dedicated brain system underlying **motivation to act**
- Loss of motivation – apathy – is common across human brain disorders
- Apathy is not depression, but is often confused with it – there may be overlaps
- **Frontostriatal systems** involved in **reward and effort processing** implicated
- Impulsivity or disinhibition often considered the polar opposite of apathy
- Frontostriatal systems also implicated, including hyperdopaminergic states
- But paradoxically **apathy and impulsivity can co-exist in same individual**

Key messages

Apathy and impulsivity are common neuropsychiatric syndromes present in many neurological disorders for which there is a huge unmet need in terms of treatment.

We need to better understand the underlying mechanisms which are complex, but several lines of research suggest that frontostriatal dysfunction might be crucial.

Further reading

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