

BRAIN & COGNITION SEMINAR

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“Why do cuddles feel good and do good ? Insights into positive touch processing from the skin to the brain“

Tuesday
February 14,
2023
12:15 to 13:15

Campus Biotech
Auditorium H8-03

& Zoom :

<https://unige.zoom.us/j/62694444617?pwd=T2wzQWNMMk9DTEVXZFhwRW94RXEwQT09>

Meeting ID: 626 9444 4617

Passcode: 617330

Abstract : Cuddles and many other forms of positive touch are naturally rewarding. Additionally, they trigger bodily changes that help regulate stress and promote prosocial attitudes and behaviors. In an attempt to explain these benefits, past research examined the properties of different somatosensory afferents in the skin and identified the C-tactile afferent (CT) as particularly relevant. This work established a putative affective touch system that presumably supports the pleasure and health benefits of positive touch. However, more recent efforts have shown that processes outside the affective touch system may be equally important. Insights into the physical properties of natural positive touch as well as touch responses in somatosensory cortex delineate a critical involvement of A β afferents traditionally associated with discriminative touch. This calls for a revision of current notions about tactile processing and an integration of CT and A β processes in our understanding of why positive touch feels good and does good.