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Placebo effects and the endocrine system: the role of oxytocin

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Curriculum Vitae

Aleksandrina Skvortsova was born on July 11, 1987 in Kokchetav, former USSR, and grew up in Estonia. She attended Narva High School #6 in Estonia between 2003 and 2006. Aleksandrina did her Bachelor's degree in Clinical Psychology in Saint-Petersburg State University between 2006 and 2011. Afterwards she worked for a year as a clinical psychologist in Narva Hospital, in Estonia. Pursuing her interest in science, she moved to the Netherlands and did a Research Master in Behavioural Sciences at the Radboud University, Nijmegen between 2012 and 2014. During her master degree, she performed two independent research projects and did a research internship in the Center of Anxiety and Related Disorders of Boston University, the USA. Additionally, she was involved in a junior research project of The European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations.

After receiving her Master degree, Aleksandrina started her PhD-project under the supervision of professor Andrea Evers, dr. Judy Veldhuijzen and dr. Henriët van Middendorp at Leiden University. Aleksandrina worked on a project sponsored by the European Research Consolidator Grant of Andrea Evers "Empowering expectations for health and disease: Training the immune and endocrine system" and investigated the link between placebo effects and the endocrine system. In addition to the research activities, she supervised multiple bachelor and master students and was a member of the organizing committee of the 2nd Official Society for Interdisciplinary Placebo Studies Conference which took place in July 2019 in Leiden, the Netherlands.

Currently, Aleksandrina works as a postdoctoral researcher and investigates the possibility to classically condition insulin responses and the role of sex differences in diabetes patients.

Articles in peer reviewed journals:

Skvortsova A, Veldhuijzen DS, van Middendorp H, Colloca L, Evers AWM. Effects of oxytocin on placebo and nocebo effects in a pain conditioning paradigm: a randomized controlled trial. *J of Pain*. 2019 (in press).

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Skvortsova A, Veldhuijzen DS, Kloosterman IE, Meijer OC, van Middendorp H, Pacheco-Lopez G, Evers AWM. Conditioned hormonal responses: a systematic review in animals and humans. *Front Neuroendocrinol*. 2018.

Skvortsova A, Veldhuijzen DS, Van Middendorp H, Van den Bergh O, Evers AW. Enhancing placebo effects in somatic symptoms through oxytocin. *Psychosom Med*. 2018;80(4):353-60.

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Wagner L, Conrad D, Gajić N, Kácha O, Martinović K, **Skvortsova A**, ... Voitenko, D. Examining Adolescents' Well-being: How Do the Orientations to Happiness Relate to Their Leisure Time Activities? *Journal of European Psychology Students* 2014;5(2).

Articles submitted for publication:

Skvortsova, A., Veldhuijzen, D.S., de Rover, M., Pacheco-Lopez, G., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., van IJzendoorn, M., Chavannes, N.H., van Middendorp, H., Evers, A.W.M. (2019). Effects of oxytocin administration and conditioned oxytocin on the perception of emotional faces, crying baby sounds and heat pain: an fMRI study. Manuscript submitted for publication.

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Judy, thank you so much for being the best daily supervisor ever. You shared not only your professional experience with me but so much emotional support and friendship, and I am endlessly grateful to you for that. Henriët, thank you for being my second supervisor and always being there for me if I had any difficulties.

I am also very grateful to all my colleagues from the unit of Health, Medical and Neuropsychology. I have been so lucky to work with all of you. It has been a unique environment. I could always stop in any office and ask for a professional help or just for a friendly chat.

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