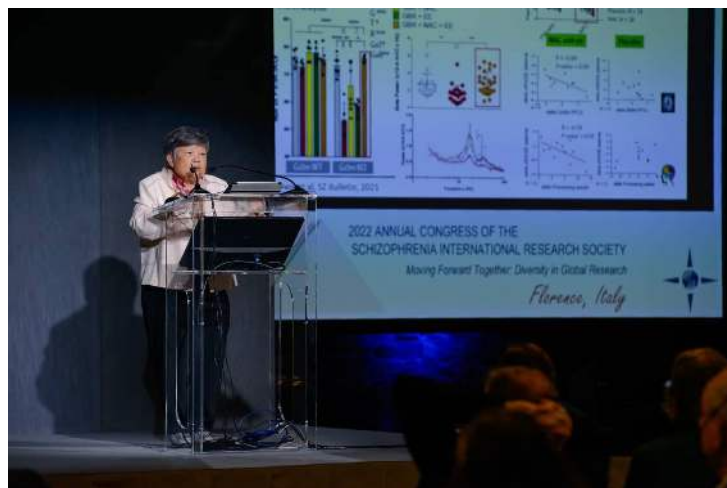


The visibility, relevance and excellence of the research conducted by Kim Do Cuénod have received outstanding international recognition. The two conferences below are prime examples:



Kim Do Cuénod gave a **plenary lecture** at the annual congress of the Schizophrenia International Research Society (SIRS), held in April 2022 in Florence, Italy.

Every year, this congress brings together a large number of researchers and clinicians from all over the world, who are active in the field of schizophrenia spectrum disorders. Kim Do Cuénod also chaired two symposia at the congress.

She was also invited to give a **special lecture** at the 142nd Annual Meeting of The Pharmaceutical Society of Japan. The meeting took place in Nagoya and was attended by several thousand people: researchers, engineers, educators and students from various fields related to pharmacy and pharmaceutical science. Kim Do Cuénod gave her lecture via Zoom on March 27, 2022.



We are also delighted to announce that Kim Do Cuénod has been elected as a **Visiting Professor** at **Harvard University** (Harvard Medical School) in Boston, USA, and at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience of **King's College** in London, UK, which are two world-renowned and highly prestigious institutions. These mandates are a great honor for Kim Do Cuénod and a wonderful recognition of her professional career. They were initiated thanks to her long-standing collaboration with **Prof. Dost Öngür** (Head of the Division of Psychotic Diseases, McLean Hospital, and Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School) and **Prof. Paola Dazzan** (Professor of the Neurobiology of Psychosis, King's College).

Since 2022, Kim Do Cuénod is also a Visiting Professor at **EPFL** in the Laboratory for Functional and Metabolic Imaging, headed by Prof. Rolf Gruetter.





The Annual Meeting 2022 of the **Swiss Society of Biological Psychiatry**, of which Kim Do Cuénod is president, was held jointly with the SFCNS (Swiss Federation of Clinical Neuro-Societies) Congress, from September 28 to 30, at the Congress Center in Basel.

Members of the SSBP Executive Committee organized plenary sessions and symposia on a variety

of topics, including the mechanisms involved in psychosis and addiction, the obstacles women face in clinical neuroscience, the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, and the etiology of psychiatric illness. These sessions/symposia were a great success, and attracted a large number of participants.

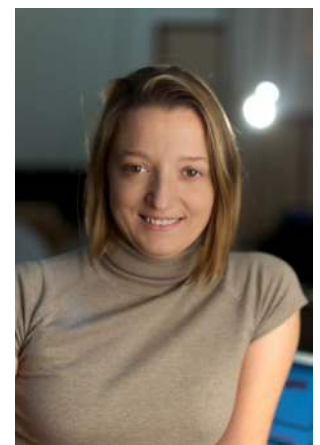
In 2022, the **Young Investigator Award** went to two researchers, whose applications were tied for first place in the evaluations of the SSBP Executive Committee. They were Dr Matthias Kirschner from the University of Zurich (see photo) and Dr Linda Simmler from the University of Geneva (who was unfortunately unable to attend the award ceremony).

The Young Investigator Award is endowed with CHF 5,000 and was sponsored by the **NCCR Synapsy** program (Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research - The Synaptic Bases of Mental Diseases), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Over 200 clinicians and neuroscientists from different regions of Switzerland (including Kim Do Cuénod and her group) took part in the 12-year program (2010-2022).



Prof. Jean-Michel Aubry

Moreover, at the SSBP General Assembly, Prof. Camilla Bellone (University of Geneva) was elected as a new member of the Executive Committee. She replaces outgoing member Prof. Jean-Michel Aubry (University of Geneva), who has worked for the SSBP for many years as member and president of the Executive Committee, and as organizer of the 2021 Annual Meeting in Geneva.



Prof. Camilla Bellone

NEWS FROM RESEARCH

AWARD-WINNING PUBLICATION

Michel Cuénod, Kim Do Cuénod et leurs collaborateurs ont publié en 2021 un article majeur concernant le rôle central d'une dérégulation de la balance entre oxydants et antioxydants (stress oxydatif), intitulé "**Caught in vicious circles: a perspective on dynamic feed-forward loops driving oxidative stress in schizophrenia**", paru dans la prestigieuse revue internationale *Molecular Psychiatry*. En janvier 2022, l'éditeur en chef de ce journal scientifique a désigné l'article en question comme l'un des plus importants de l'année; en effet, **il fait partie des 12 articles avec le plus haut facteur d'impact publiés par *Molecular Psychiatry* en 2021**. Sur le site Internet de *Nature* (maison d'édition de *Molecular Psychiatry*) le commentaire suivant a été mis en ligne (traduction de l'anglais):

"Kim Do and Michel Cuenod, Lausanne University Hospital (10 Nov 2021), provide an elegant and compelling overview of a growing body of evidence, including their own pioneering and groundbreaking work, demonstrating a pathological link between oxidative stress and schizophrenia. This evidence identifies oxidative stress as a convergence point or "central hub" for schizophrenia genetic and environmental risk factors. They review the existing experimental and translational research pinpointing the complex dynamics of oxidative stress mechanisms and their modulation in relation to schizophrenia pathophysiology. "

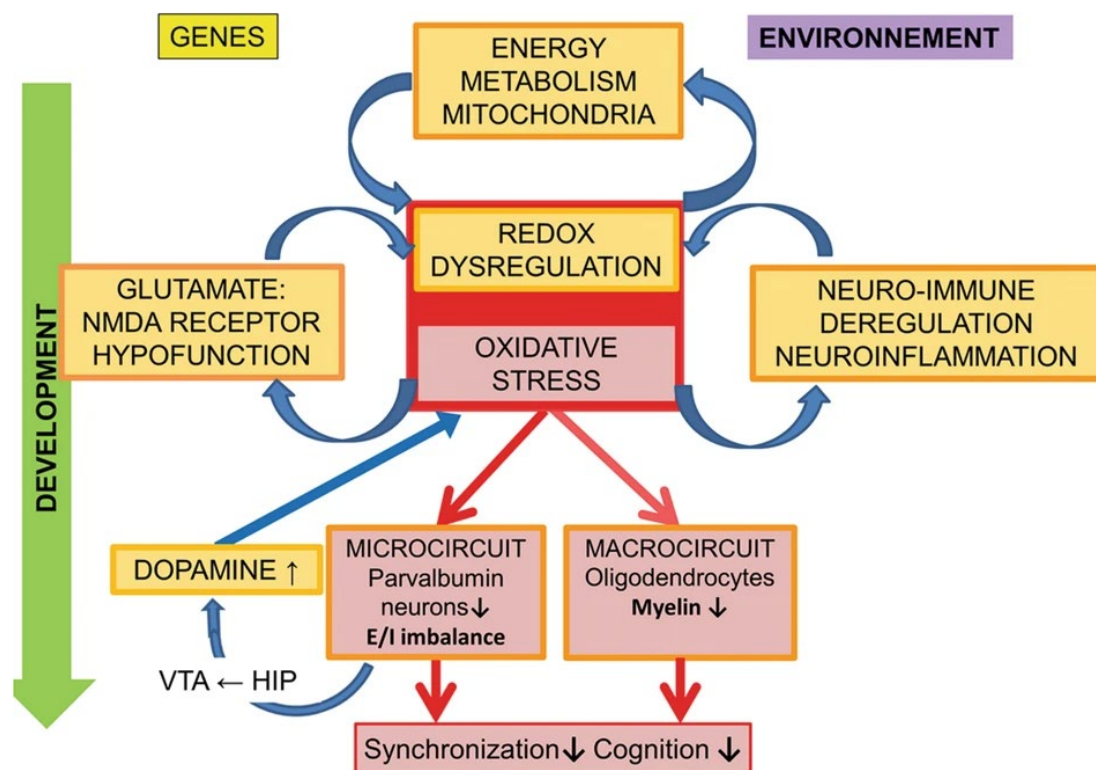


Figure illustrating the vicious circles described in the above-mentioned article

Molecular Psychiatry is ranked among the top 10 journals in the field of psychiatry worldwide, and publishes studies aimed at elucidating the biological mechanisms underlying psychiatric disorders and their treatment.

CLINICAL TRIAL WITH MITOQ

As reported in the newsletter 2021, Kim Do Cuénod and her colleagues have launched the planning of a clinical trial with a substance called MitoQ, an antioxidant specifically targeted at mitochondria, which provide the energy essential for the proper functioning of neurons, particularly parvalbumin interneurons (PVI) which play a key role in the performance of cognitive, affective and social activities, and which are damaged in the brains of patients with schizophrenia. **This trial represents the culmination of long-standing pioneering experimental work, as well as a potentially major breakthrough in the treatment of psychosis.**

The conduct of a clinical trial requires prior approval from **SwissEthics**, the umbrella organization of cantonal human research ethics commissions, as well as an authorization from **SwissMedic**, the Swiss authority for the authorization and control of therapeutic products. Official authorization must be granted sequentially by these two bodies.

MitoQ is a dietary supplement registered as such in the USA and the European Union, but unfortunately not in Switzerland.

As a result, and against all expectations, SwissEthics has classified MitoQ as a medicine and not as a dietary supplement. Following this decision, the clinical trial dossier was forwarded to SwissMedic.

SwissMedic requires precise and specific documentation for any drug submitted for authorization; the manufacturer of MitoQ (Antipodean Pharmaceuticals) has been unable to provide such documentation, as the substance in question has so far only been registered as a dietary supplement.

The team in charge of the clinical trial thus found itself at an **impasse**, given SwissMedic's refusal to authorize the trial and SwissEthics' refusal to classify MitoQ as a dietary supplement and not as a drug.

As a result, the clinical trial will be restructured and postponed, but not abandoned. Organizational alternatives are being evaluated and are well underway.

SCHIZOPHRENIA INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH SOCIETY (SIRS)

Kim Do Cuénod is Chair of the SIRS Awards Committee, which assigns every year several prizes to young researchers as well as established scientists worldwide. These awards recognize major achievements in basic, clinical and translational research; the SIRS Awards also include an *Excellence Award*, a *Rising Star Award*, a *Global Schizophrenia Award* and a *Distinguished Service Award*. All these awards have a high international profile, and chairing the committee that grants them therefore represents a particular recognition and honor.

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