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Impact of Maternal Immune Activation on Nonhuman Primate Prefrontal Cortex Development: Insights for Schizophrenia

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Abstract

Late adolescence is a period of dynamic change in the brain as humans learn to navigate increasingly complex environments. In particular, prefrontal cortical (PFC) regions undergo extensive remodeling as the brain is fine-tuned to orchestrate cognitive control over attention, reasoning, and emotions. Late adolescence also presents a uniquely vulnerable period as neurodevelopmental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, become evident and worsen into young adulthood. Challenges in early development, including prenatal exposure to infection, may set the stage for a cascade of maladaptive events that ultimately result in aberrant PFC connectivity and function before symptoms emerge. A growing body of research suggests that activation of the mother's immune system during pregnancy may act as a disease primer, in combination with other environmental and genetic factors, contributing to an increased risk of neurodevelopmental disorders, including schizophrenia. Animal models provide an invaluable opportunity to examine the course of brain and behavioral changes in offspring exposed to maternal immune activation (MIA). Although the vast majority of MIA research has been carried out in rodents, here we highlight the translational utility of the nonhuman primate (NHP) as a model species more closely related to humans in PFC structure and function. In this review, we consider the protracted period of brain and behavioral maturation in the NHP, describe emerging findings from MIA NHP offspring in the context of rodent preclinical models, and lastly explore the translational relevance of the NHP MIA model to expand understanding of the etiology and developmental course of PFC pathology in schizophrenia.

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EPIDEMIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Exposure to infection during pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in offspring, including schizophrenia (1). Mounting evidence indicates that disruption in fetal neurodevelopment may be due to the mother's immune response to the pathogen rather than the pathogen itself (2). This maternal immune activation (MIA) hypothesis is supported by a growing body of seroepidemiological studies that link specific maternal inflammatory biomarkers with offspring neurodevelopmental outcomes, ranging from subtle alterations to profound neurodevelopmental disorders (3). Preclinical animal models of MIA-exposed offspring offer powerful translational tools to evaluate the neurobiological consequences of artificially activating the maternal immune system during gestation in a controlled environment (1,4,5). While rodent model systems have greatly advanced our understanding of the link between MIA and atypical offspring neurodevelopment (6), nonhuman primates (NHPs) and humans share greater similarities in placental structure and pregnancy physiology, maternal-fetal interface, gestational timeline, fetal brain development, and overall brain structure-particularly in the prefrontal cortex (PFC) (7). The NHP model has emerged as a powerful tool to evaluate a diverse range of gestational conditions, such as obesity, poor diet, and maternal stress, that are associated with maternal inflammation and adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes (8). Indeed, emerging data from human (9-11,148) and NHP (12) studies suggest that natural variation in maternal cytokines, in the absence of an infection, can influence offspring neurodevelopment.

UNIQUE FEATURES OF NHPs

While no animal model can recapitulate human-specific, behaviorally defined brain disorders (13), here we focus on the unique translational potential of the most commonly employed NHP in biomedical research, the rhesus macaque (Macaca mulatta). Similar to humans, rhesus monkeys live in large social hierarchies and rely on sophisticated multimodal communicative repertoires (14). Brain regions underlying social and cognitive processing show similar patterns of activity in humans and NHPs (15). Figure 1 details the organization and complexity of the PFC in the rodent, monkey, and human brain. Although cross-species definitions of PFC vary (16-18), expansion of PFC regions has been a hallmark of primate evolution, with the elaboration of associative territories involved in executive function, emotional processing, and communication. Rhesus monkey and human brains follow very similar patterns in early gestation, when the symmetrical division of cortical progenitor cells yields units comprised of asymmetrically dividing progenitor cells, ultimately resulting in the production of cortical columns (19–21). Radial glia guide the migration of cortical neurons, yielding region-specific patterns of cytoarchitectural organization. This nearly 2-month-long period of neurogenesis and migration in the primate brain reflects its greater size and complexity (22), as neurons develop in place, producing dendritic arbors and developing spines across the primate life span (23,24). Importantly, the onset of rapid synaptogenesis occurs prenatally in humans and monkeys, but postnatally in rodents, representing a unique vulnerability in primate cortical development in utero that cannot be reproduced in rodent models. The process of myelination in the brain also follows species-specific trajectories (25), beginning postnatally in rats and mice and

prenatally in monkeys and humans-though not uniformly across all regions. The PFC may be especially vulnerable to prenatal insults such as MIA owing to its complexity as well as its unique protracted course of development and maturation. Myelination in the PFC continues long past sexual maturity, culminating around rodent postnatal day 90 to 100, age 13 years in the monkey (26), and into the third decade of life in humans (27,28). A complex interplay between glial cells, including oligodendrocytes and microglia, and neuronal cells contributes to the development of long-range connectivity in the brain and supports the structural development of myelin in white matter (29). Alterations to myelin development and structure are a particularly important feature of schizophrenia (30) and thus represent a critical pathway that may be affected by MIA in unique ways in the primate brain.

ESTABLISHING THE NHP MIA MODEL

In this review, we focus on the poly(I:C) (polyinosinic:polycytidylic acid)-based rhesus monkey MIA model established in our laboratory that characterizes offspring neurodevelopment through the critical period of late adolescence/early adulthood (birth to 4 years of age) that captures dynamic PFC-related changes in brain and behavioral development. We first evaluated behavioral development in NHP offspring born to dams injected with the viral mimic, poly(I:C), in the late first or second trimester (31,32) and later expanded our characterization of this cohort to include immune system evaluation (33), in vivo positron emission tomography imaging (34), and postmortem cellular and molecular studies [K.L. Hanson, Ph.D., et al., unpublished data, May 2022; (35)]. Although we are at the earliest stages of exploring neuropathology in the NHP MIA model, the gestational timing of the prenatal immune challenge may provide some insight into which stages of fetal brain development may be affected. Peak periods of neurogenesis for subcortical structures, including the amygdala (36), thalamus (37), striatum (38), and hippocampus (39), occur during the late first trimester. In macaques, corticogenesis also begins at the end of the first trimester and continues through the second trimester (40). Exposure to prenatal immune challenge may disrupt these finely orchestrated events and could initiate a cascade of aberrant brain and behavioral development. Alterations in offspring social development were observed in offspring exposed to MIA in the first (but not second) trimester, which led us to focus exclusively on MIA induction in the late first trimester in our subsequent larger cohorts (41).

Social Development in MIA NHP Offspring

Our initial NHP MIA model generated two cohorts of offspring born to dams that received three injections of a modified form of poly(I:C) in either the late first or the second trimester, and these cohorts were compared with offspring born to saline-injected or untreated dams (31). Both groups of MIA-exposed offspring initially exhibited species-typical patterns of development and were indistinguishable from control offspring in the majority of early developmental assessments. MIA-treated offspring developed a species-typical repertoire of vocalizations, body postures, and facial expressions used to facilitate rhesus monkey social interactions and did not differ from control offspring in the amount of time they spent engaged in social interactions, including reciprocal play behavior with age-matched peers. However, when the MIA animals were temporarily removed from these

familiar environments and observed alone, they produced more motor stereotypic behaviors compared with control animals. Under these conditions, the second-trimester MIA–exposed offspring also demonstrated a reduction in affiliative coo call vocalizations that are thought to serve the function of reestablishing contact with conspecifics (42–44). Interestingly, the group with first-trimester MIA exposure demonstrated a reduction in coo calls when removed from their home cage and introduced to an unfamiliar peer in a modified version of the rodent social approach test described below, suggesting that the presence of an unfamiliar animal may differentially impact social buffering for the MIA groups (45,46).

In contrast to rodents, rhesus monkeys exhibit a species-typical hesitation before immediately approaching and interacting with an unfamiliar animal-failure of which can have negative consequences, including physical harm (47,48). However, the first-trimester MIA-exposed offspring more frequently approached the unfamiliar animals and spent nearly twice as much time in the immediate proximity of the novel animal compared with the other two groups. We next initiated a series of noninvasive eye-tracking studies to evaluate gaze patterns of the NHPs with first-trimester MIA exposure when viewing social images depicting rhesus monkey facial expressions (32). MIA-treated offspring showed a reduction in average fixation time after the first presentation that was not observed in control offspring. The MIA-treated animals also took longer than the control animals to direct their attention to the eyes and looked less at the eyes than control animals when viewing fearful/submissive faces. Collectively, these initial studies indicate that MIA-treated NHPs fail to regulate species-typical social behavior across both controlled and semi-naturalistic contexts in response to potentially threatening stimuli. As described below, we consider these impairments in species-typical social behavior demonstrated by the MIA-treated NHP offspring to be translationally relevant to changes in social cognition in individuals with schizophrenia (49). Additional studies are under way to map the emergence of changes in species-typical development in our most recent cohort of MIA-exposed NHPs, which, as described below, includes longitudinal eve-tracking data. As our understanding of rearing practices and housing conditions that reduce stress among laboratory-reared NHPs has advanced in the 15 years since the original cohort was created (50-52), these more recent studies may also provide insight into interactions between enhanced enrichment, social buffering, and stress reduction (45,53) and the emergence of MIA-induced behavioral changes.

Cognitive Development in MIA NHP Offspring

Recent work in a cohort of first-trimester MIA–exposed male offspring has explored the emergence of brain and behavioral changes from birth to 4 years of age (41), highlighting the effects of MIA on the cognitive phenotype. In addition to forthcoming comprehensive assessment of social development, the NHP MIA offspring were tested using a variety of cognitive tasks relevant to PFC function, beginning with a reversal learning paradigm at 18 months of age, followed by additional cognitive assessments from 3 to 4 years that included the continuous performance test, probabilistic reversal learning task, progressive ratio breakpoint task, and intradimensional/extradimensional task. These tasks assess attention, reward learning, motivation, and set shifting, similar to paradigms used in schizophrenia research. Overall, MIA offspring performed similarly to control offspring, while exhibiting

subtle, but consistent differences in measures of omission errors (reversal learning), misses in the intradimensional/extradimensional task, and an increased number of false alarms on the continuous performance test. These differences appear to reflect a difficulty adaptively

the continuous performance test. These differences appear to reflect a difficulty adaptively forming and using a task set or an overemphasis of negative feedback on performance. In the vast majority of measures, MIA offspring perform similarly to control offspring, in contrast to the relatively robust changes found in brain imaging. Age at testing likely contributes to variability in findings, as NHP late adolescence may be comparable to the age of the prodromal phase seen in individuals with schizophrenia.

PFC Vulnerability in NHP MIA Model

In our early analyses, the PFC had already emerged as uniquely vulnerable to in utero MIA exposure in NHPs. The same animals that exhibited subtle impairments in cognitive performance described above also underwent longitudinal neuroimaging at 6 months and yearly from ages 1 to 4 (41). MIA-treated offspring demonstrated a significant reduction in frontal and prefrontal gray matter that was first detected at 6 months of age and persisted through the final scan at nearly 4 years of age. Additionally, there was a significant reduction in underlying white matter that emerged between 3 and 4 years of age. Taken together, it appears that volumetric reductions are specific to the frontal lobes in MIA NHP offspring and persist across the early life span. As described below, volumetric reductions have emerged as a consistent outcome in rodent MIA models (54) and have been reported following prenatal influenza exposure in NHPs (55). Although future cellular and molecular studies on postmortem brain tissue from this cohort are needed to provide insight into the neurobiological mechanisms underlying this reduction, preliminary in vivo neuroimaging results (56) suggest a significant increase in extracellular free water, a potential biomarker for neuroinflammation seen in first-episode psychosis (57-59) that has also been noted in rats exposed in utero to MIA (60).

We have initiated studies to evaluate brain tissue from our early pilot cohorts, finding differences in dendritic morphology of pyramidal cells in dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC) of MIA-exposed NHP offspring (61). Specifically, analyses of Golgi-stained neurons revealed reduced diameter of apical dendrites as well as increased branching of apical dendrites from tissue obtained in late adolescence. These results were replicated in a subsequent cohort (K.L. Hanson, Ph.D., et al., unpublished data, May 2022) that additionally found outcomes were not affected by first- or second-trimester exposure. Though it is not known when these morphological changes emerged, atrophy of apical dendrites in PFC neurons (including reduced diameter) has been associated with chronic stress (62,63). Given that peripubertal stress has been shown to exacerbate some of the MIA-induced changes in rodent offspring neurodevelopment (64,65), our ongoing studies include more comprehensive assessments of biological indices of stress, including cortisol and inflammatory biomarkers. Interestingly, increased apical dendritic branching has also been shown in rats exposed to high levels of ethanol in adolescence (66). The structure of dendritic trees determines the electrophysiological properties of neurons (67–71), and morphological variability of branch points may significantly alter synaptic activity by decreasing differential impedance, affecting cellular excitability (72). Thus, MIA exposure resulting in changes to the morphology of apical dendrites may have significant

consequences for membrane excitability and neuronal function and the balance of inputs to cortical neurons.

We have also observed differences in gene expression in MIA NHP offspring from initial pilot cohorts that further hint at aberrant neurodevelopment affecting the PFC (35). RNA sequencing was performed in the DLPFC and the anterior cingulate cortex along with the hippocampus and primary visual cortex, and results were compared between NHP offspring with first- and second-trimester MIA exposure and control animals. Similar to morphological findings, differences in gene expression showed a high degree of concordance between first- and second-trimester MIA–exposed NHP offspring, with the notable exception of greater downregulation of the serotonin receptor-associated gene *HTR3A* in first-trimester MIA–exposed NHP offspring. Importantly, gene expression differences were observed with region-specific effects: the DLPFC showed a significantly higher number of differently expressed genes than the anterior cingulate cortex, where effects were minimal. This finding underscores the importance of examining the highly derived DLPFC region, which may be especially vulnerable to the effects of MIA that cannot be observed in rodent PFC.

COMPARISON WITH RODENT MIA MODELS

Although the focus of this review is on NHP MIA models, it is important to acknowledge that the vast majority of MIA models have used rodents to provide foundational knowledge on the neurodevelopmental consequences of MIA exposure. Alongside increased costs and methodological constraints associated with their extended life history and development, the greater physical, psychological, and social needs of primates require unique ethical considerations for their use in research in captivity. Rodent models additionally offer expanded utility in modeling genetic differences, environmental stressors, and drug treatment effects as well as allowing for the use of complex mechanistic protocols, including optogenetic or chemogenetic manipulations. It is also possible to generate larger cohort sizes among litters, which can reduce the variability in a model that is quite variable (6), while also increasing statistical power. Although NHPs are an excellent modeling system for MIA to compare to the human condition, foundational studies in the rodent are valuable for establishing mechanisms of MIA in a reasonably short time frame. Below we briefly summarize the extensive literature of behavioral and PFC-related pathologies across rodent MIA models, despite significant evolutionary differences between mice and rats that impact performance in these behavioral domains (73,74).

Overview of Social and Cognitive Deficits in the Rodent MIA Models

More comprehensive reviews of behavioral alterations in rodent MIA models (75,76) have demonstrated the influence of sex, strain, species, vendor, MIA-induction methods, and postnatal testing paradigms and ages. Despite methodological variability, changes in species-typical social development have emerged as a common feature of many rodent MIA models (6). MIA-exposed rodent offspring consistently show impairments in social approach, especially when MIA induction occurs in early to mid-gestation (75). Although early MIA models focused on adult-onset changes in behavior, several recent studies have demonstrated

social behavior deficits in prepubertal animals (77,78), suggesting that impairments in social behavior might be an early indicator of MIA-induced behavioral pathology. Indeed, several studies have reported alterations in pup ultrasonic vocalizations (79–81), which are often interpreted as an early communicative signal of mother-pup interaction. Alterations in social behavior have also emerged as a key behavioral outcome that can be used to stratify MIA-exposed mice into susceptible and resilient groups (82), though additional factors including offspring sex, inflammatory status, and postnatal environment may also play a role in the emergence of MIA-induced social deficits (82-86). MIA-induced changes in cognitive abilities have also been reported in numerous rodent studies. Working memory is commonly assessed using the spontaneous alternation task or T-maze alternation task, and most MIA studies report a deficit in the rodent's ability to remember the arms it has previously entered (87–93). Tests that require associative learning or memory beyond working memory capacity include the novel object recognition task, Morris water maze, latent inhibition, and fear conditioning. MIA rodents in general also tend to have deficits in these associative learning tasks (77,94-101,147), although some studies have reported no differences in learning between control and treatment groups (102). Evidence suggests that performance on associative or working memory-based learning with a reward component is more variable. On touch screen visual discrimination, simple odor discrimination, set shifting, and trial-unique nonmatching-to-location tasks, many studies report a decrease in performance in MIA offspring (92,103–108), though several studies show performance equal to or greater than control animals (103-112). Although early MIA models focused on adult-onset changes in behavior, cognitive deficits have also been reported in MIA-exposed juveniles (77,87).

Overview of PFC Pathology in Rodent MIA Models

The rodent MIA field is quickly evolving and will likely provide additional insight into potential mechanistic differences underlying social and cognitive deficits, which will clarify what changes, if any, are occurring in the PFC and other relevant brain regions. MIA-exposed rodent offspring demonstrate numerous alterations in cellular and molecular properties, neurochemistry, structure, and function in different brain regions (113). Given the role of the PFC in mediating social and cognitive processes across species (114,115), it is not surprising that many rodent MIA models have noted PFC pathology. Global volumetric reductions are consistently noted in rodent MIA models (54), with reduced frontal volume reported in both mid-gestation MIA-treated rats (116,117) and late first trimester MIA-treated NHPs (41). Emerging cellular and molecular findings in rodent models have hinted at important future directions for guiding investigations into the longterm effects of MIA in the NHP PFC. Disruptions to immune processes in the rodent PFC are of particular translational interest, though the effects of MIA on activated microglia, a common target of investigations in schizophrenia, remain controversial (118). A popular hypothesis in the etiology and presentation of neurodevelopmental disorders highlights the disruption in the balance between inhibitory and excitatory neuronal signaling, which has been implicated in schizophrenia (119,120). Interestingly, rodent MIA models have demonstrated significant changes in excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmission, specifically implicating the interaction of dendritic spines with vGlut2 and GAD65 positive presynaptic puncta (121). Further evidence of disruptions to the GABAergic (gamma-aminobutyric

acidergic) system includes reduced expression of GAD65/67 messenger RNA and hypermethylation of GAD (glutamic acid decarboxylase) promoter regions in the PFC (88). Additionally, evidence from rodent models suggests selective vulnerabilities in inhibitory cell types: MIA-exposed rats showed a significant decrease in the number of parvalbuminpositive inhibitory interneurons surrounded by perineuronal nets in the medial PFC (122). Systemic loss of perineuronal nets is known to be a feature of schizophrenia, and investigating the impacts of changes in parvalbumin-positive interneuron architecture may be of particular interest for understanding altered cellular communication. Critically, alterations to the GABAergic system show a protracted developmental trajectory in NHPs, such that inhibitory synapses of interneurons onto pyramidal neurons in the DLPFC strengthen in adolescence (123), particularly in parvalbumin-positive subtypes (124). Further, disruptions to multiple neurotransmitter systems, including dopamine and serotonin, have been identified in rodent MIA models. Given the centrality of dopamine to many hypotheses of schizophrenia pathophysiology and that more extensive dopaminergic innervation is a hallmark of primate PFC, examining these systems in an NHP model may be of exceptional importance. Of course, these systems require examination in the context of the broader network of motivational and reward-related circuitry, implicating frontostriatal and frontoamygdalar circuitry, the latter of which shows distinctive patterns of change in inhibitory neurotransmission (125) between subjects exposed to either prenatal or postnatal immune activation.

TRANSLATIONAL RELEVANCE TO SCHIZOPHRENIA

We suggest that the protracted period of development, sophisticated behavioral repertoire, and complex PFC neuroanatomy positions the NHP MIA model to bridge the gap between rodent MIA models and clinical studies (Figure 2). The primate PFC undergoes rapid and dynamic refinement during the adolescent period (126), and MIA may set the stage for altered neurodevelopment with long-term consequences that ultimately manifest during the critical time when symptoms of psychiatric illness occur (127,128). Following a period of typical early development, the MIA-exposed NHPs in our research begin to exhibit changes in brain and behavioral development spanning a period roughly equivalent to early childhood through late adolescence that are translationally relevant to the neurodevelopmental trajectory of schizophrenia (129). Our early studies (31,32) revealed alterations in species-typical social development in MIA-exposed NHPs that are relevant to core domains of social cognition impacted by schizophrenia (130). The restricted scan path strategy and reduced attention to salient facial features exhibited by MIA-exposed NHPs in late adolescence shares features with individuals with schizophrenia (131). The development of noninvasive eye-tracking methods (132) has allowed us to incorporate longitudinal eye tracking into our most recent MIA cohorts and will be the focus of future publications, allowing us to explore the emergence of social, cognitive, and in vivo brain changes in the same animals. Indeed, the subtle impairments of cognitive performance exhibited by this latest cohort of MIA-treated NHPs align with the premorbid phase of schizophrenia, characterized by attentional and other cognitive deficits in later childhood and adolescence (133) that become more severe over time (134). The cognitive tasks used in that study were also chosen for their translatability to clinical work, as evidenced by impairments in these

domains at various stages of disease progression (135–137). Given that our NHP cohort is still at the early stages of development, behavioral differences between groups may be more subtle and continue to evolve (138).

Investigations at multiple levels indicate widespread dysfunction and altered organization of the PFC in schizophrenia and strongly implicate the primate DLPFC (139). Our recent work demonstrates that MIA-treated NHPs display reduced PFC volumes at 3.5 to 4 years of age (41), a period that coincides roughly with observations of reduced gray matter volume in adolescents with schizophrenia (140,141) and may serve as a biomarker of neurodevelopmental risk (142). Though postmortem investigations from MIA-treated NHPs provide only a snapshot in time, cellular (61) and molecular (35) differences indicate important changes in the adolescent brain in MIA-exposed NHP PFC that may share characteristics with psychiatric illness. However, the majority of postmortem studies in schizophrenia are carried out in adults; postmortem studies of MIA-exposed NHPs provide an important opportunity to evaluate cellular and molecular changes before symptoms appear. Additional research into the longitudinal effects of MIA on the brain has the potential to elucidate broader long-term consequences with relevance to altered neurodevelopment across the human life span. As noted above, schizophrenia is a highly heterogeneous disorder with multiple comorbidities, including medications and environmental influences. Research using postmortem brain tissue from individuals with schizophrenia provides insight into the cellular and molecular outcomes of the disorder, but is also complicated by the heterogeneous life history of each individual. Rodent studies provide a controlled environment from which to consider the etiology and course of schizophrenic features, but they are limited by substantial differences in PFC structure and function. NHPs, who share the unique architecture of the brain and developmental trajectory with humans, provide an invaluable compromise in a controlled environment to model features of schizophrenia longitudinally across the life span, for tremendous insight into potential etiologies such as MIA, and to develop strategies that intervene before symptoms worsen during the vulnerable period of adolescence. The MIA model may also provide insight into the complex developmental epigenetic mechanisms that link early MIA with schizophrenia etiology in late adolescence and early adulthood (143). Indeed, rodent models have identified transcriptomic and epigenomic mechanisms that mediate the downstream effects of MIA in rodent models, including PFC-specific alterations (144). Interestingly, transgenerational changes in MIA offspring behavior have been documented through multiple mouse generations (145,146). These effects were specific to offspring of males born to MIA-treated mothers, indicating that paternal sperm methylation may have been the source of this transgenerational effect. Our future NHP models will explore these transcriptomic and epigenomic mechanisms in a species more closely related to humans.

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Figure 1.

Organization of the PFC in the human, macaque, and rat brain. Expansion and elaboration of PFC regions has been a hallmark of primate evolution, including territories involved in executive function, such as BAs 9 and 46 of the dlPFC, language and speech production (BA 44/45), and socio-emotional processing (BAs 47/12, 10, 11, and 13). Granular cortices, defined by the presence of a clear layer IV, represent canonical PFC territories with unique functional architectonics that subserve complex multimodal processing. Agranular territories more closely resemble the ventromedial PFC and aCC (BAs 24 and 32) of the primate brain and serve as a critical interface for integration of limbic and sensory information. aCC, anterior cingulate cortex; BA, Brodmann area; dlPFC, dorsolateral prefrontal cortex; dmPFC, dorsomedial PFC; FEF, frontal eye fields; M1, primary motor area; M2, supplementary motor area; mPFC, medial PFC; OFC, orbitofrontal cortex; vlPFC, ventrolateral PFC. [Macaque and rodent illustrations were adapted with permission from Preuss and Wise (17).]



of mPFC, working memory, and socioemotional development^{9-11, 148}

mirroring changes in SZ

Differences in volume and cellular organization in SZ¹¹⁹

Altered inhibitory: excitatory balance in SZ¹²⁰

Figure 2.

Evidence of PFC dysfunction in schizophrenia populations and preclinical MIA models. A rapidly growing literature from rodent MIA models paired with decades of human schizophrenia studies highlights changes in PFC-related behavior and underlying neurobiology in the animal model and the clinical population. Although the NHP MIA model literature is less extensive compared with the rodent MIA literature owing to the time and resources required to generate each cohort, emerging findings from NHP MIA offspring also include changes in social and cognitive development, reductions in frontal gray and white matter, altered dorsolateral PFC dendritic morphology, and gene expression. MIA, maternal immune activation; NHP, nonhuman primate; PFC, prefrontal cortex.