

## Research Studies

### North American Prodrome Longitudinal Study (NAPLS)

Mental health problems affect many individuals and often begin to develop in adolescence or young adulthood. The goal of the NAPLS study is to improve the ability to identify youth who are at risk for developing psychosis and better understand why some young people develop psychosis and others do not. This study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and is part of a group of prodromal research sites across North America [1].

The NAPLS Project is recruiting young people in the San Francisco Bay Area who are concerned about the possibility of developing psychosis. Your involvement may help us to learn how certain mental health problems begin, how to predict who may be most at risk, and who is most likely to improve over time.

People experiencing the following symptoms may be at increased risk for developing an illness like psychosis:



[2]

#### Unusual thinking

- Confusion about what is real or imaginary
- Wondering if people can read your mind or hear your thoughts
- Having thoughts that don't feel like your own
- Feeling like your ideas or behaviors are being controlled by outside forces
- Preoccupation with the supernatural
- The familiar feels strange, confusing, threatening
- Changes in sense of self, others, or the world

### **Perceptual abnormalities**

- It seems that the mind/eyes/ears are playing tricks or are misperceiving reality (for example, mistaking a dog barking for someone calling out a name)
- Changes in perceptual sensitivity, either heightened or dulled
- Unexpected perceptual changes, noises, lights, shadows, geometrical designs, and whispers or hearing one's name called
- Increased sensitivity to smells and tastes
- Hallucinations (for example, hearing voices or seeing things that aren't really there)

### **Suspiciousness**

- Worrying that others are thinking bad thoughts about you
- Thinking others may wish to harm you in some way
- Feeling mistrustful of other people
- Feeling uneasy or fearful around other people
- Suspiciousness or paranoid thinking

### **Disorganized thinking**

- Confused or muddled thinking
- Using the wrong words, talking about things irrelevant to context of conversations, or going off track
- Losing track of conversations or not understanding what people are saying
- Difficulty paying attention or remembering simple things

### **Grandiose thinking**

- Unrealistic notions of being especially important, talented, gifted, powerful, or superior to others

### **Social withdrawal**

- Decreased interest in spending time or talking with friends or family
- Less interested in everyday activities or hobbies
- Preferring to be alone

For more information and to find out how to participate in our research, contact Izzy Lopez at (415) 476-7278 [oritzel.lopez@ucsf.edu](mailto:oritzel.lopez@ucsf.edu)<sup>[3]</sup>.

## Benefits of research

- All participants undergo a clinical evaluation and neuropsychological assessment
- Referral services and case management, of necessary
- Eligible participants are compensated for their time
- Participants in neuroimaging studies will receive a clinical read if indicated
- Research participation may help contribute to the understanding and treatment of young people with mental health concerns in the future

## Publications

- *Schizophrenia Bulletin*: Towards a psychosis risk blood diagnostic for persons experiencing high-risk symptoms: Preliminary results from the NAPLS project <sup>[4]</sup>
- *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*: North American Prodrome Longitudinal Study (NAPLS 2): The prodromal symptoms <sup>[5]</sup>
- *Biological Psychiatry*: Progressive reduction in cortical thickness as psychosis develops: A multi-site longitudinal neuroimaging study of youth at elevated risk <sup>[6]</sup>
- *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*: Family-focused treatment for adolescent and young adults at high risk for psychosis: Results of a randomized trial <sup>[7]</sup>

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### Links

[1] <https://campuspress.yale.edu/napls/sites/>

[2] <https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/path/research>

[3] <mailto:itzel.lopez@ucsf.edu>

[4] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25103207>

[5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25919383>

[6]

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Progressive+Reduction+in+Cortical+Thickness+as+Psychosis+Develop>

[7] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25062592>