



MIST matters

The Hotchkiss Brain Institute Mental Health Initiative for Stress and Trauma

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH DAY JUNE 13, 2025

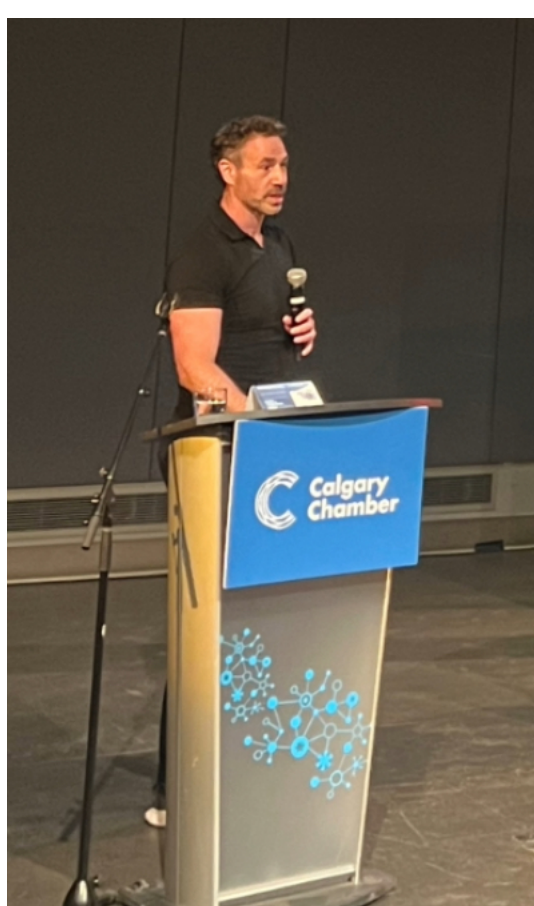
The time to talk about men's mental health is now

Today, on International Men's Mental Health Day, we confront a sobering reality: in Canada nearly [one million men experience major depression](#) each year, with [17 per cent of Canadian men](#) rating their mental health as fair or poor. These numbers reflect a mental health crisis that affects families and communities across the country, including right here in Calgary.

This edition of *MIST matters* is dedicated to the [memory of Mike McClay](#), whose tragic passing in 2021 was a profound loss. In response, his friends, family and community came together, partnering with the Hotchkiss Brain Institute to launch the Mental Health Initiative for Stress and Trauma (MIST).

With your support, we're working to change the conversation by driving leading-edge research, raising awareness, and building systems of support that recognize the real impact of emotional stress and trauma.

Dr. Matthew Hill, PhD
MIST Research Chair



Calgary Chamber X MIST: Men's Mental Health Forum

On May 13, MIST partnered with the [Calgary Chamber of Commerce](#) to shine a light on men's mental health. This powerful forum sparked open, honest conversations and took aim at the stigma that keeps too many men from seeking help.

Mental health is a business issue, a community issue and a human issue. Creating space for men to speak openly and access support without shame is key to building healthier workplaces, stronger families and more resilient communities.



Understanding your stress index

Knowing your stress score can be the first step toward healthier coping strategies. Take a moment to check your current stress levels using the Canadian Mental Health Association's [Stress Index Tool](#).



140 riders, one goal: better mental health for all

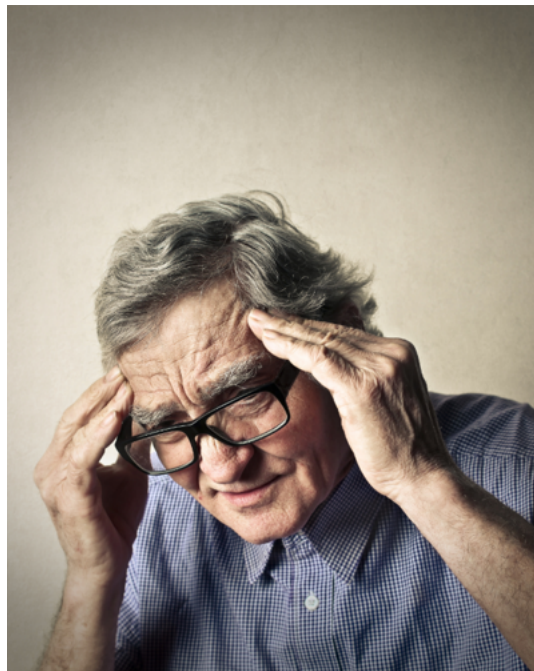
Our [3rd annual Hustle with Hunt Spin-a-Thon](#) lit up the rooftop of the King Eddy with energy and purpose. We were blown away by the strength of our MIST community who came together to make this year's UCalgary Giving Day a great success. Thanks to 140 incredible riders, and the many others who supported from the sidelines, we raised more than \$55,000 for MIST research.

[View the photo gallery and see if you can spot yourself!](#)



Meet Dr. Leah Mayo, PhD

Dr. Leah Mayo is the inaugural [Parker Chair in Psychedelics Research](#), leading innovative studies on how psychedelic compounds may transform the treatment of stress-related mental health conditions. Her work focuses on the endocannabinoid system, a network of chemical signals and cellular receptors that control how the body works. She's investigating this system's role in PTSD and substance-use disorders and how emotional and traumatic experiences shape brain function. With a PhD in neurobiology from the University of Chicago, Dr. Mayo has conducted research across the U.S., Sweden and now Canada, bringing a wealth of knowledge and talent to our MIST team.



Stress warps fear memory

New findings, including [research co-led by Dr. Matt Hill, PhD](#), reveal how stress can distort fear memories in the brain. Stress may cause fear responses to spread beyond the original threat, helping explain why trauma can lead to anxiety in otherwise safe situations. This work deepens understanding of PTSD and highlights the brain's remarkable, and sometimes problematic, flexibility under stress. [Read more here](#).

Upcoming events

Leadership at the Speed of Science: Stress and Performance

Join us [October 1st](#) for a dynamic conference in Calgary, exploring how neuroscience can help leaders manage stress and perform at their best. [More info here](#).

In case you missed it

Dr. Leah Mayo on the Future of Psychedelic Therapy

Hear her insights on the *Just Asking* podcast about how psychedelics could reshape treatment for PTSD, anxiety and depression. [Listen here](#).

Buddy Up for suicide prevention

The Centre for Suicide Prevention's Buddy Up campaign is a call to action to men, by men, to drive authentic conversation between buddies. [Learn more and get involved](#).

For questions or comments, contact us at: mist@ucalgary.ca.
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