



# MIST matters

The Hotchkiss Brain Institute Mental Health Initiative for Stress and Trauma



## Dr. Matt Hill: What's next for MIST?

This fall is shaping up to be an exciting season for MIST. From testing psilocybin therapy for concussion recovery to uncovering the hidden role of hormones after brain injury, our research is advancing new approaches to understanding and treating brain injury.

In early fall, several MIST researchers presented newly generated data on stress, mental health and new treatment interventions at conferences in Canada, the United States, Spain and Sweden.

The international recognition of their work at these conferences, focused on psychiatry, neuroscience and the therapeutic potential of psychedelics and cannabinoids, will help to further our mission of disseminating the great work done here at UCalgary.

Just as importantly, we're creating opportunities to bring our community together here in Calgary — sparking meaningful connections and conversations.

I invite you to explore the updates below and join us as we push toward a future where the impacts of stress and trauma can be better understood, treated and ultimately prevented. Together, we're changing the future of mental health.

*Dr. Matthew Hill, PhD*  
MIST Research Chair



## Exploring psilocybin therapy for concussion recovery

For many living with persistent post-concussion symptoms (PPCS), there are still no proven treatments. MIST researchers, Dr. Leah Mayo, PhD, and Dr. Chantel Debert, MD, are driving research to find new, effective options to improve recovery and quality of life for those living with PPCS. Our teams at the [Psychedelics and Cannabinoid Therapeutics Lab](#) and the [Brain Neurorehabilitation Lab](#) are testing whether psilocybin-assisted therapy, a treatment that has already shown promise for depression, anxiety and chronic headaches, could help. We've begun enrolling participants and have already completed our first psilocybin session, with more scheduled this fall.



## Meet Dr. Chantel Debert, MSc, MD, PGME

A psychiatrist, scientist and associate professor at UCalgary, Dr. Debert leads the [Brain Neurorehabilitations Laboratory](#). Her work focuses on concussion and traumatic brain injury, developing better ways to diagnose and support recovery so patients can return to their daily lives.

"Brain injury is an invisible condition — patients often look and sound fine, but under the surface they're not," says Debert.

"I feel so lucky every day to see these patients and then translate their needs directly into research questions in my lab, so I can discover solutions that help them get better — it's a full circle and it's so rewarding".

One of Dr. Debert's studies explores growth-hormone deficiency after concussion. Up to 40 per cent of people with concussion experience hormone deficiencies that can cause fatigue, mood changes and poor sleep, yet these problems are often overlooked. The study is investigating how growth hormone deficiency may cause long-term symptoms. Early findings suggest that better screening could dramatically improve recovery for many people.

## Upcoming events



## Come ride with us

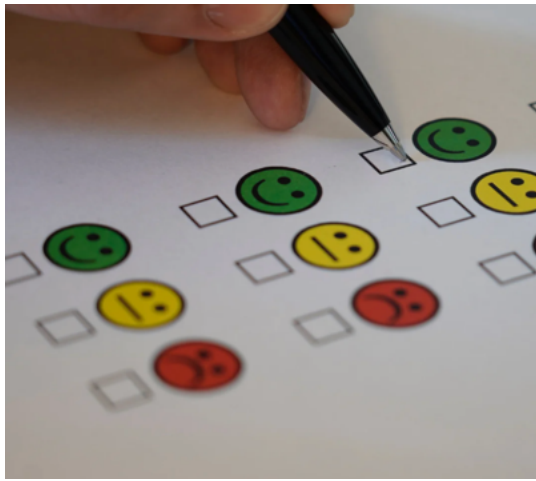
Join us, Sunday, Nov. 30th, for the [Wings for Wellness - Charity Ride for Mental Health!](#) YYC Cycle and the Grey Eagle Resort & Casino are hosting one of the largest indoor cycling charity events the city has ever seen.

Two back-to-back spin classes will bring together 200 riders, community leaders, local celebrities and businesses at the Event Centre off Glenmore Trail S.W. on Grey Eagle Drive, raising critical funds for MIST. [Get your tickets here!](#)

## Spotlight: Cresco Cares chooses MIST as 2025 charity partner

We're thrilled that [Cresco Cares](#), a charity committee within Cresco Wealth Management at Wellington-Altus Private Wealth, named MIST as its designated charity of the year for 2025. To launch the partnership, Cresco invited Dr. Matt Hill to join the [Cresco Wealthcast](#) for a candid conversation on concussions, chronic stress and suicidal ideation — and how MIST is actively funding clinical trials and raising awareness to close critical gaps in mental health care.

## Listen to the episode



## Mental Health Needs Assessment

Have you or someone you know experienced a concussion? Helps us better understand the mental health needs in our community for individuals with a history of concussion by [completing our quick survey](#). Your input will help guide MIST's priorities and ensure that our programs and research meet the real need of our community.



## Leadership at the Speed of Science Summit

This summit brought together innovators from the health-care, business and community sectors to explore how brain science can shape leadership, resilience and performance. It featured an uplifting keynote from Canadian astronaut, business leader and tech entrepreneur Col. Chris Hadfield. MIST researchers Drs. Matt Hill, Leah Mayo, both PhD, and Dr. Araba Chintoh, MD, PhD, shared insights on how stress and trauma affect the brain.

The evening before the summit, nearly 100 MIST community members and conference attendees joined Dr. Hill at Calgary's River Cafe for his conversation with Canadian business executive Kenneth Irving about his personal mental health journey.

One powerful theme: stress is not inherently good or bad. For some, it fuels focus and performance; for others, it overwhelms. What matters is how we interpret and navigate it.



## Annual "September Longer" weekend

In early September, many of MIST's founding donors, champions and researchers teed off in Fernie, B.C., at this year's annual general meeting and golf tournament [honouring Mike McClay](#). This weekend was filled with connection, reflection and a first look at our upcoming 10-Year Strategic Plan — [coming soon!](#)

For questions or comments, contact us at: [mist@ucalgary.ca](mailto:mist@ucalgary.ca).  
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