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## The gut microbiome regulates memory function

Emily E Noble<sup>1</sup>, Elizabeth Davis<sup>2</sup>, Linda Tsan<sup>2</sup>, Yen-Wei Chen<sup>3</sup>, Christine A. Olson<sup>3</sup>,  
Ruth Schade<sup>1</sup>, Clarissa Liu<sup>2</sup>, Andrea Suarez<sup>2</sup>, Roshonda B Jones<sup>2</sup>, Michael I Goran<sup>2</sup>,  
Claire de La Serre<sup>1</sup>, Xia Yang<sup>3</sup>, Elaine Y. Hsiao<sup>3</sup>, and Scott E Kanoski<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, USA; <sup>2</sup>University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA; <sup>3</sup>University of California, Los Angeles, California, USA

### Correspondence:

Scott E. Kanoski, Ph.D  
University of Southern California  
3616 Trousdale Parkway, AHF-252  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0372  
Phone: [213-821-5762](tel:213-821-5762)  
Email: [kanoski@usc.edu](mailto:kanoski@usc.edu)

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25 **Abstract (250 words)**

26 The mammalian gastrointestinal tract contains a diverse ecosystem of microbial species  
27 collectively making up the gut microbiota. Emerging evidence highlights a critical  
28 relationship between gut microbiota and neurocognitive development. Consumption of  
29 unhealthy yet palatable dietary factors associated with obesity and metabolic  
30 dysfunction (e.g., saturated fat, added sugar) alters the gut microbiota and negatively  
31 impacts neurocognitive function, particularly when consumed during early life  
32 developmental periods. Here we explore whether excessive early life consumption of  
33 added sugars negatively impacts neurocognitive development via the gut microbiome.  
34 Using a rodent model of habitual sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) consumption during  
35 the adolescent stage of development, we first show that excessive early life sugar intake  
36 impairs hippocampal-dependent memory function when tested during adulthood while  
37 preserving other neurocognitive domains. 16S rRNA gene sequencing of the fecal and  
38 cecal microbiota reveals that early life SSB consumption alters the relative abundance of  
39 various bacterial taxa. In particular, SSB elevates fecal operational taxonomic units  
40 within the genus *Parabacteroides*, which negatively correlate with memory task  
41 performance. Additional results reveal that transferred enrichment of *Parabacteroides*  
42 species *P. distasonis* and *P. johnsonii* in adolescent rats impairs memory function  
43 during adulthood. Hippocampus transcriptome analyses identify gene expression  
44 alterations in neurotransmitter synaptic signaling, intracellular kinase signaling,  
45 metabolic function, neurodegenerative disease, and dopaminergic synaptic signaling-  
46 associated pathways as potential mechanisms linking bacterial alterations with memory  
47 impairment. Collectively these results identify a role for microbiota “dysbiosis” in

48 mediating the negative effects of early life unhealthy dietary factors on neurocognitive

49 outcomes.

50

## 51 **Introduction**

52

53 The gut microbiome is increasingly implicated in modulating neurocognitive  
54 development and consequent functioning <sup>1,2</sup>. Early life developmental periods represent  
55 critical windows for the impact of indigenous gut microbes on the brain, as evidenced by  
56 the reversal of behavioral and neurochemical abnormalities in germ free rodents when  
57 inoculated with conventional microbiota during early life, but not during adulthood <sup>3-5</sup>.  
58 Dietary factors are a critical determinant of gut microbiota diversity and can alter gut  
59 bacterial communities, as evident from the microbial plasticity observed in response to  
60 pre- and probiotic treatment, as well as the “dysbiosis” resulting from consuming  
61 unhealthy, yet palatable foods that are associated with obesity and metabolic disorders  
62 (e.g., “Western diet”; foods high in saturated fatty acids and added sugar) <sup>6</sup>. In addition  
63 to altering the gut microbiota, consumption of these dietary factors yields long-lasting  
64 memory impairments, and these effects are more pronounced when consumed during  
65 early life developmental periods vs. during adulthood <sup>7-9</sup>. Whether diet-induced changes  
66 in specific bacterial populations are functionally related to altered early life  
67 neurocognitive outcomes, however, is poorly understood.

68

69 The hippocampus, which is well known for its role in spatial and episodic memory and  
70 more recently for regulating learned and social aspects of food intake control <sup>10-15</sup>, is  
71 particularly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of Western dietary factors <sup>16-18</sup>. During  
72 the juvenile and adolescent stages of development, a time when the brain is rapidly  
73 developing, consumption of diets high in saturated fat and sugar <sup>19-21</sup> or sugar alone <sup>22-25</sup>  
74 impairs hippocampal function while in some cases preserving memory processes that do

75 not rely on the hippocampus. While several putative underlying mechanisms have been  
76 investigated, the precise biological pathways linking dietary factors to neurocognitive  
77 dysfunction remain largely undetermined<sup>9</sup>. Here we aimed to determine whether sugar-  
78 induced alterations in gut microbiota during early life are causally related to  
79 hippocampal-dependent memory impairments observed during adulthood.

80

81 **Early-life sugar consumption impairs hippocampal-dependent memory**  
82 **function without affecting other neurocognitive domains**

83

84 Results from the Novel Object in Context (NOIC) task, which measures hippocampal-  
85 dependent episodic contextual memory function<sup>26</sup>, reveal that while there were no  
86 differences in total exploration time of the combined objects on days 1 or 3 of the task  
87 (Fig. 1A,B), animals fed sugar solutions in early life beginning at PN 28 had a reduced  
88 capacity to discriminate an object that was novel to a specific context when animals  
89 were tested during adulthood (PN 60), indicating impaired hippocampal function (Fig.  
90 1C, D). Conversely, when tested in the novel object recognition task (NOR), which tests  
91 object recognition memory independent of context and is primarily dependent on the  
92 perirhinal cortex<sup>26-28</sup>, animals fed sugar solutions in early life performed similarly to  
93 those in the control group (Fig. 1E).

94

95 Elevated anxiety and altered general activity levels may influence novelty exploration  
96 independent of memory effects and may therefore confound the interpretation of  
97 behavioral results. Thus, we next tested whether early life sugar consumption affects  
98 anxiety-like behavior using two different tasks designed to measure anxiety in the rat:

99 the elevated zero maze and the open field task, that latter of which also assesses levels of  
100 general activity <sup>29</sup>. Early life sugar had no effect on time spent in the open area or in the  
101 number of open area entries in the zero maze (Fig. 1F, G). Similarly, early life sugar had  
102 no effect on distance travelled or time spent in the center zone in the open field task  
103 (Fig. 1H, I). Together these data suggest that habitual early life sugar consumption did  
104 not increase anxiety-like behavior or general activity levels in the rats.

105

### 106 **Early life sugar consumption impairs glucose tolerance without affecting** 107 **total caloric intake, body weight, or adiposity**

108

109 Given that excessive sugar consumption is associated with weight gain and metabolic  
110 deficits <sup>30</sup>, we tested whether access to a sugar solution during the adolescent phase of  
111 development would affect food intake, body weight gain, adiposity, and glucose  
112 tolerance in the rat. Early life sugar consumption had no effect on body weight or total  
113 kcal intake (Fig. 1J, K), which is in agreement with previous findings <sup>22,31,32</sup>. Animals  
114 steadily increased their intake of the 11% sugar solution throughout the study but  
115 compensated for the calories consumed in the sugar solutions by reducing their intake  
116 of dietary chow (Supplemental Fig. 1A, B). There were no differences in body fat  
117 percentage during adulthood (Fig. 1L) or in total grams of body fat or lean mass.  
118 However, animals that were fed sugar solutions during early life showed impaired  
119 peripheral glucose metabolism in an intraperitoneal glucose tolerance test (IP GTT)  
120 (Fig. 1L, Supplemental Fig 1C-E).

121

### 122 **Gut microbiota are impacted by early life sugar consumption**

123  
124 Principal component analyses of 16s rRNA gene sequencing data of fecal samples  
125 revealed a separation between the fecal microbiota of rats fed early life sugar and  
126 controls (Fig. 2A). Results from LEfSe analysis identified differentially abundant  
127 bacterial taxa in fecal samples that were elevated by sugar consumption. These include  
128 the family *Clostridiaceae* and the genus *O2D06* within *Clostridiaceae*, the family  
129 *Mogibacteriaceae*, the family *Enterobacteriaceae*, the order *Enterobacteriales*, the  
130 class of *Gammaproteobacteria*, and the genus *Parabacteroides* within the family  
131 *Porphyromonadaceae* (Fig. 2B,C). In addition to an elevated % relative abundance of  
132 the genus *Parabacteroides* in animals fed early life sugar (Fig 2D), log transformed  
133 counts of the *Parabacteroides* negatively correlated with performance scores in the  
134 NOIC memory task ( $R^2=.64$ ,  $P<.0001$ ; Fig. 2E). Within *Parabacteroides*, levels of three  
135 operational taxonomic units (OTUs) that were elevated by sugar significantly correlated  
136 negatively with performance in the NOIC task, two of which were identified as  
137 taxonomically related to *P. johnsonii* and *P. distasonis* (Fig. 2F, G). The significant  
138 negative correlation between NOIC performance and each of these OTUs was also  
139 present within the sugar groups alone (not shown). Abundance of other bacterial  
140 populations that were affected by sugar consumption were not significantly related to  
141 memory task performance.

142       There was a similar separation between groups in bacteria analyzed from cecal  
143 samples (Supplemental Fig. 2A). LEfSe results from cecal samples show elevated *Bacilli*,  
144 *Actinobacteria*, *Erysipelotrichia*, and *Gammaproteobacteria* in rats fed early life sugar,  
145 and elevated *Clostridia* in the controls (Supplemental Fig. 2B). Abundances at the  
146 different taxonomic levels in fecal and cecal samples are shown in (Supplemental Fig. 3,

147 4). Regression analyses did not identify these altered cecal bacterial populations as  
148 being significantly correlated to NOIC memory performance.

149

### 150 **Early life *Parabacteroides* enrichment impairs memory function**

151

152 To determine whether neurocognitive outcomes due to early life sugar consumption  
153 could be attributable to elevated levels of *Parabacteroides* in the gut, we experimentally  
154 enriched the gut microbiota of naïve juvenile rats with two *Parabacteroides* species that  
155 exhibited high 16S rRNA sequencing alignment with OTUs that were increased by sugar  
156 consumption and were negatively correlated with behavioral outcomes in rats fed early  
157 life sugar. *P. johnsonii* and *P. distasoni* species were cultured individually under  
158 anaerobic conditions and transferred to a group of antibiotic-treated young rats in a 1:1  
159 ratio via oral gavage using the experimental design described in Methods and outlined  
160 in Supplemental Fig. 5A, and from <sup>33</sup>. All rats treated with antibiotics showed a  
161 reduction in food intake and body weight during the initial stages of antibiotic  
162 treatment, however, there were no differences in body weight between the two groups of  
163 antibiotic treated animals by PN50, at the time of testing (Supplemental Fig. 5B, C).

164 Results from the hippocampal-dependent NOIC memory task showed that while  
165 there were no differences in total exploration time of the combined objects on days 1 or  
166 3 of the task, indicating similar exploratory behavior, animals treated with  
167 *Parabacteroides* showed a significantly reduced discrimination index in the NOIC task  
168 (Fig 3A-D), indicating impaired performance in hippocampal-dependent memory  
169 function. When tested in the perirhinal cortex-dependent NOR task <sup>26</sup>, animals treated  
170 with *Parabacteroides* showed impaired object recognition memory as indicated by a



171 reduced novel object exploration index, with no differences in total exploration time (Fig  
172 3E). These findings show that unlike sugar-fed animals, *Parabacteroides* enrichment  
173 impaired perirhinal cortex-dependent memory processes in addition to hippocampal-  
174 dependent memory.

175         Results from the zero maze showed a non-significant trend toward reduced time  
176 spent in the open arms and a reduced number of open arm entries for the  
177 *Parabacteroides* treated rats (Fig 3F, G), which is indicative of increased anxiety-like  
178 behavior. However, there were no differences in distance travelled or time spent in the  
179 center arena in the open field test, which is a measure of both anxiety-like behavior and  
180 general activity in rodents (Fig. 3H, I). Together these data suggest that  
181 *Parabacteroides* treatment negatively impacted both hippocampal-dependent  
182 perirhinal cortex-dependent memory function without significantly affecting general  
183 activity or anxiety-like behavior.

184         Similar to a recent report <sup>34</sup>, *Parabacteroides* enrichment in the present study  
185 impacted body weight. Animals who received *P. johnsonii* and *P. distasonis* treatment  
186 showed reduced body weight 40 days after the transfer, with significantly lower lean  
187 mass and a trend toward reduced fat mass (Fig 3J-L). There were no differences in  
188 percent body fat between groups, nor were there significant group differences in glucose  
189 metabolism in the IPGTT (Supplemental Fig. 5D, E).

190

191 **Early life sugar consumption and *Parabacteroides* enrichment alter**  
192 **hippocampal gene expression profiles**

193

194 To further investigate how sugar and *Parabacteroides* affect cognitive behaviors, we  
195 conducted transcriptome analysis of the hippocampus samples. Supplemental Fig 6A  
196 shows the results of principal component analysis revealing moderate separation based  
197 on RNA sequencing data from the dorsal hippocampus of rats fed sugar in early life  
198 compared with controls. Gene pathway enrichment analyses from RNA sequencing data  
199 revealed multiple pathways significantly affected by early life sugar consumption,  
200 including four pathways involved in neurotransmitter synaptic signaling: dopaminergic,  
201 glutamatergic, cholinergic, and serotonergic signaling pathways. Additionally, several  
202 gene pathways that also varied by sugar were those involved in kinase-mediated  
203 intracellular signaling: cGMP-PKG, RAS, cAMP, and MAPK signaling pathways (Fig. 4A,  
204 Supplemental Table 1).

205 Analyses of individual genes across the entire transcriptome using a stringent  
206 false-discovery rate criterion further identified 21 genes that were differentially  
207 expressed in rats fed early life sugar compared with controls, with 11 genes elevated and  
208 10 genes decreased in rats fed sugar compared to controls (Fig 4B). Among the genes  
209 impacted, several genes that regulate cell survival, migration, differentiation, and DNA  
210 repair were elevated by early life sugar access, including *Faap100*, which encodes an FA  
211 core complex member of the DNA damage response pathway<sup>35</sup>, and *Eepd1*, which  
212 transcribes an endonuclease involved in repairing stalled DNA replication forks,  
213 stressed from DNA damage<sup>36</sup>. Other genes associated with ER stress and  
214 synaptogenesis were also significantly increased by sugar consumption, including *Klf9*,  
215 *Dgkh*, *Neurod2*, *Ppl*, and *Kirrel1*<sup>37,38,39,40</sup>.

216 Several genes were reduced by dietary sugar, including *Tns2*, which encodes  
217 tensin 2, important for cell migration<sup>41</sup>, *RelA*, which encodes a NF/kB complex protein

218 that regulates activity dependent neuronal function and synaptic plasticity<sup>42</sup>, and  
219 *Grm8*, the gene for the metabotropic glutamate receptor 8 (mGluR8). Notably, reduced  
220 expression of mGluR8 receptor may contribute to the impaired neurocognitive  
221 functioning in animals fed sugar, as mGluR8 knockout mice show impaired  
222 hippocampal-dependent learning and memory<sup>43</sup>.

223 Supplemental Fig 6B shows the results of principal component analysis of dorsal  
224 hippocampus RNA sequencing data indicating moderate separation between rats  
225 enriched with *Parabacteroides* and controls. Gene pathway analyses revealed that early  
226 life *Parabacteroides* treatment, similar to effects associated with sugar consumption,  
227 significantly altered the genetic signature of dopaminergic synaptic signaling pathways,  
228 though differentially expressed genes were commonly affected in opposite directions  
229 between the two experimental conditions (Supplemental Fig 7). *Parabacteroides*  
230 treatment also impacted gene pathways associated with metabolic signaling.  
231 Specifically, pathways regulating fatty acid oxidation, rRNA metabolic processes,  
232 mitochondrial inner membrane, and valine, leucine, and isoleucine degradation were  
233 significantly affected by *Parabacteroides* enrichment. Other pathways that were  
234 influenced were those involved in neurodegenerative disorders, including Alzheimer's  
235 disease and Parkinson's disease, though most of the genes affected in these pathways  
236 were mitochondrial genes (Fig. 4D, Supplemental Table 2).

237 At the level of individual genes, dorsal hippocampal RNA sequencing data  
238 revealed that 15 genes were differentially expressed in rats enriched with  
239 *Parabacteroides* compared with controls, with 13 genes elevated and two genes  
240 decreased in the *Parabacteroides* group compared with controls (Fig 4C). Consistent  
241 with results from gene pathway analyses, several individual genes involved in metabolic

242 processes were elevated by *Parabacteroides* enrichment, such as *Hmgcs2*, which is a  
243 mitochondrial regulator of ketogenesis and provides energy to the brain under  
244 metabolically taxing conditions or when glucose availability is low <sup>44</sup>, and *Cox6b1*, a  
245 mitochondrial regulator of energy metabolism that improves hippocampal cellular  
246 viability following ischemia/reperfusion injury <sup>45</sup>. *Parabacteroides* enrichment was also  
247 associated with increased expression of *Slc27A1* and *Mfrp*, which are each critical for the  
248 transport of fatty acids into the brain across capillary endothelial cells <sup>46,47</sup>.

249

## 250 **Discussion**

251 Dietary factors are a key source of gut microbiome diversity <sup>31,33,48-50</sup> and  
252 emerging evidence indicates that diet-induced alterations in the gut microbiota may be  
253 linked with altered neurocognitive development <sup>33,50-52</sup>. Our results identify species  
254 within the genus *Parabacteroides* that are elevated by habitual early life consumption of  
255 dietary sugar and are negatively associated with hippocampal-dependent memory  
256 performance. Further, targeted microbiota enrichment of *Parabacteroides* perturbed  
257 both hippocampal- and perirhinal cortex-dependent memory performance. These  
258 findings are consistent with previous literature in showing that early life consumption of  
259 Western dietary factors impair neurocognitive outcomes <sup>8,9</sup>, and further suggest that  
260 altered gut bacteria due to excessive early life sugar consumption may functionally link  
261 dietary patterns with cognitive impairment.

262 Our previous data show that rats are not susceptible to habitual sugar  
263 consumption-induced learning and memory impairments when 11% sugar solutions are  
264 consumed ad libitum during adulthood, in contrast to effects observed in the present  
265 and previous study in which the sugar is consumed during early life development <sup>22</sup>. It is

266 possible that habitual sugar consumption differentially affects the gut microbiome when  
267 consumed during adolescence vs. adulthood. However, a recent report showed that  
268 adult consumption of a high fructose diet (35% kcal from fructose) promotes gut  
269 microbial “dysbiosis” and neuroinflammation and cell death in the hippocampus, yet  
270 without impacting cognitive function <sup>53</sup>, suggesting that perhaps neurocognitive  
271 function is more susceptible to gut microbiota influences during early life than during  
272 adulthood. Indeed, several reports have identified early life critical periods for  
273 microbiota influences on behavioral and neurochemical endpoints in germ free mice <sup>3,5</sup>  
274 4. However, the age-specific profile of sugar-associated microbiome dysbiosis and  
275 neurocognitive impairments remains to be determined.

276         While our study reveals a strong negative correlation between levels of fecal  
277 *Parabacteroides* and performance in the hippocampal-dependent contextual episodic  
278 memory NOIC task, as well as impaired NOIC performance in rats given access to a  
279 sugar solution during adolescence, sugar intake did not produce impairments in the  
280 perirhinal cortex-dependent NOR memory task. That early life sugar consumption  
281 negatively impacts hippocampal-dependent spatial <sup>22</sup> and contextual-based learning  
282 without influencing NOR performance is consistent with previous reports using a  
283 cafeteria diet high in both fat content and sugar <sup>54</sup>. On the other hand, enrichment of *P.*  
284 *johnsonii* and *P. distasonis* in the present study impaired memory performance in both  
285 tasks, suggesting a broader impact on neurocognitive functioning with this targeted  
286 bacterial enrichment approach.

287         Gene pathway enrichment analyses from dorsal hippocampus RNA sequencing  
288 identified multiple neurobiological pathways that may functionally connect gut  
289 dysbiosis with memory impairment. Early life sugar consumption was associated with

290 alterations in several neurotransmitter synaptic signaling pathways (e.g., glutamatergic,  
291 cholinergic) and intracellular signaling targets (e.g., cAMP, MAPK). A different profile  
292 was observed in *Parabacteroides*-enriched animals, where gene pathways involved with  
293 metabolic function (e.g., fatty acid oxidation, branched chain amino acid degradation)  
294 and neurodegenerative disease (e.g., Alzheimer's disease) were altered relative to  
295 controls. Given that sugar has effects on bacterial populations in addition to  
296 *Parabacteroides*, and that sugar consumption and *Parabacteroides* treatment  
297 differentially influenced peripheral glucose metabolism and body weight, these  
298 transcriptome differences in the hippocampus are not surprising. However, gene  
299 clusters involved with dopaminergic synaptic signaling were significantly influenced by  
300 both early life sugar consumption and *Parabacteroides* treatment, thus identifying a  
301 common pathway through which both diet-induced and gut bacterial infusion-based  
302 elevations in *Parabacteroides* may influence neurocognitive development. Though  
303 differentially expressed genes were commonly affected in opposite directions in  
304 *Parabacteroides* enriched animals compared with early life sugar treated animals, it is  
305 possible that perturbations to the dopamine system play a role in the observed cognitive  
306 dysfunction. For example, while dopamine signaling in the hippocampus has not  
307 traditionally been investigated for mediating memory processes, several recent reports  
308 have identified a role for dopamine inputs from the locus coeruleus in regulating  
309 hippocampal-dependent memory and neuronal activity<sup>55,56</sup>. Interestingly, endogenous  
310 dopamine signaling in the hippocampus has recently been linked with regulating food  
311 intake and food-associated contextual learning<sup>57</sup>, suggesting that dietary effects on gut  
312 microbiota may also impact feeding behavior and energy balance-relevant cognitive  
313 processes.

314

315           Many of the genes that were differentially upregulated in the hippocampus by  
316 *Parabacteroides* enrichment were involved in fat metabolism and transport. Thus, it is  
317 possible that *Parabacteroides* conferred an adaptation in the brain, shifting fuel  
318 preference away from carbohydrate toward lipid-derived ketones. Consistent with this  
319 framework, *Parabacteroides* was previously shown to be upregulated by a ketogenic  
320 diet in which carbohydrate consumption is drastically depleted and fat is used as a  
321 primary fuel source due. Furthermore, enrichment of *Parabacteroides merdae* together  
322 with *Akkermansia muciniphila* was protective against seizures in mice <sup>33</sup>. It is possible  
323 that *P. distasonis* reduces glucose uptake from the gut, enhances glucose clearing from  
324 the blood, and/or alter nutrient utilization in general, an idea further supported by  
325 recent finding that *P. distasonis* is associated with reduced diet- and genetic-induced  
326 obesity and hyperglycemia in mice <sup>34</sup>.

327           Collective results provide mechanistic insight into the neurobiological  
328 mechanisms that link early life unhealthy dietary patters with altered gut microbiota  
329 changes and neurocognitive impairments. Currently probiotics, live microorganisms  
330 intended to confer health benefits, are not regulated with the same rigor as  
331 pharmaceuticals but instead are sold as dietary supplements. Our findings suggest that  
332 gut enrichment with certain species of *Parabacteroides* is potentially harmful for  
333 neurocognitive mnemonic development. These results highlight the importance of  
334 conducting rigorous basic science analyses on the relationship between diet,  
335 microorganisms, brain, and behavior prior to widespread recommendations of bacterial  
336 microbiome interventions for humans.

337

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346

347 **Author Contributions**

348 E.E.N. and S.E.K. designed the experiments. E.E.N. performed the majority of the  
349 behavioral experiments and analyzed the data. E.D. helped with the behavioral  
350 experiments and performed the RNA sequencing preparation with Y.C. and X.Y. for  
351 analyses of the RNA sequencing data. C.A.O. and E.Y.H. contributed to the design and  
352 implementation of the bacterial enrichment procedure. R.J., M.G., R. S. and C.D.L.S.,  
353 performed the gut microbiome analyses. L.T., C.L., and A.S., helped with behavioral  
354 experiments. The paper was written by E.E.N and S.E.K. with additional editorial input  
355 from the other authors.

356

357 **Competing interests**

358 The authors declare no competing interests



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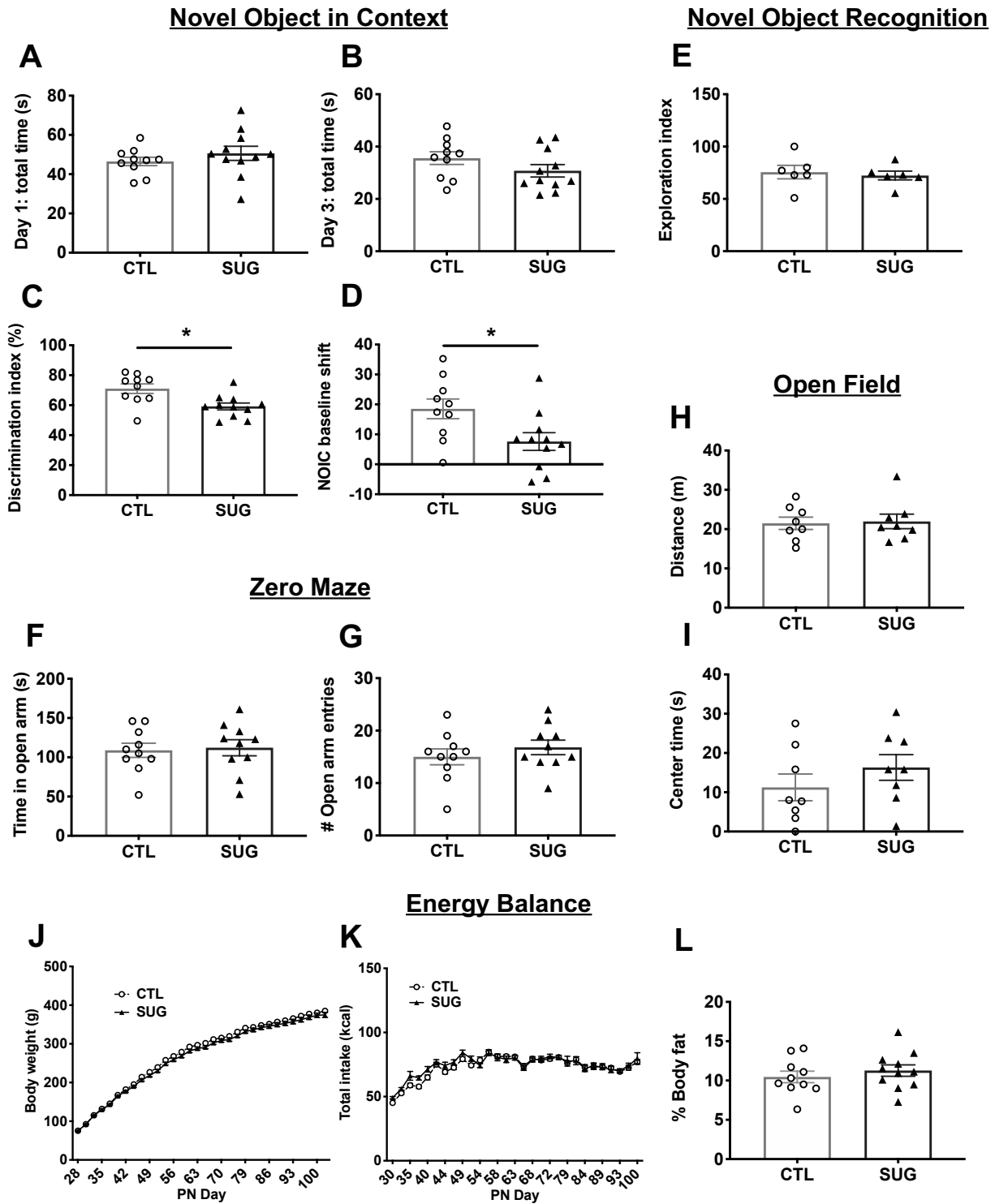
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Figure 1

522

523 **Figures and Legends**



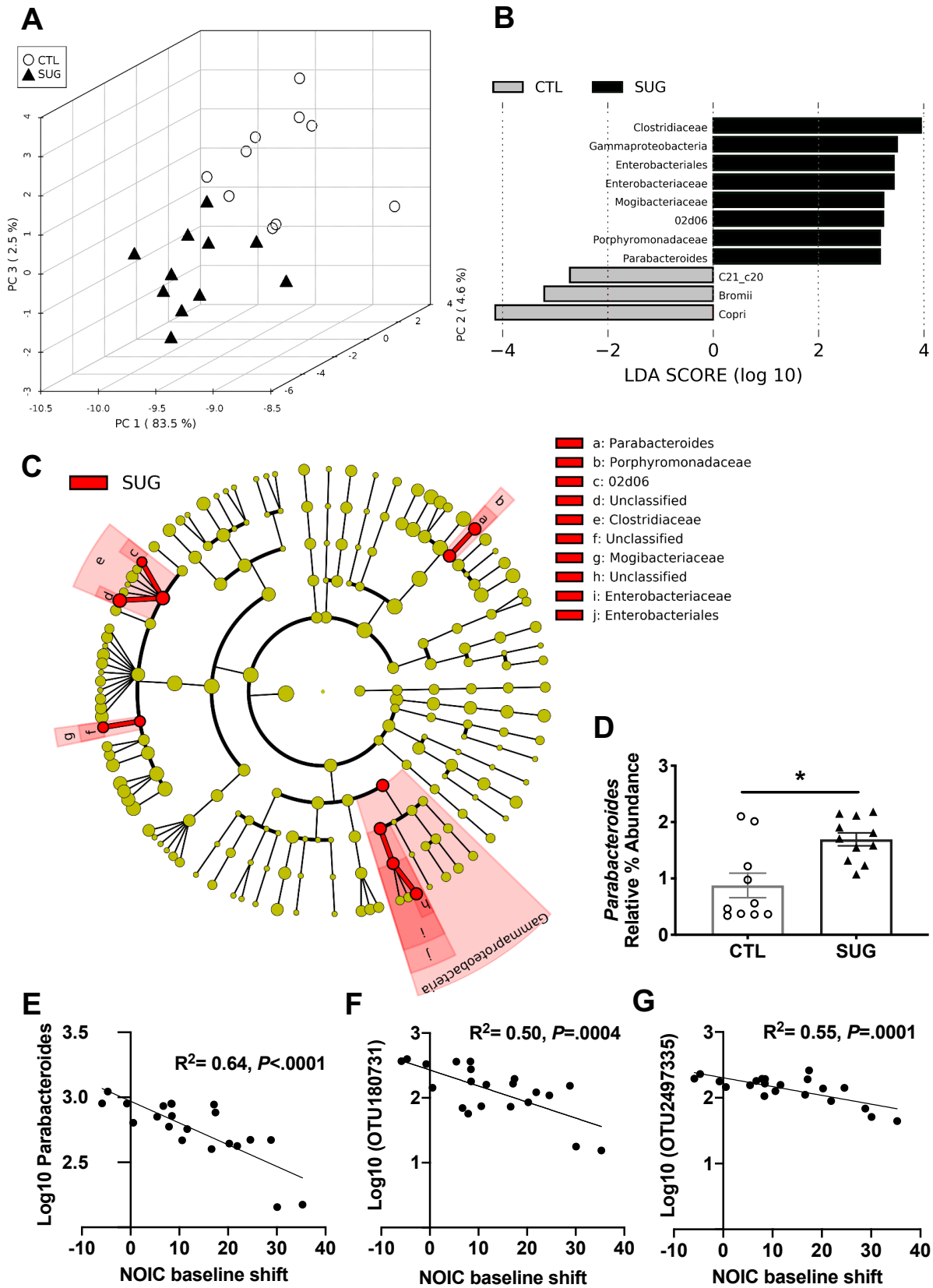
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526 **Figure 1: Early-life sugar consumption negatively impacts hippocampal-**  
527 **dependent memory function.** (A,B) Early life sugar consumption had no effect on  
528 total exploration time in the Novel Object in Context (NOIC) task. (C,D) discrimination  
529 index and discrimination shift from baseline were significantly reduced by early life  
530 sugar consumption, indicating impaired hippocampal function ( $P < .05$ ,  $n=10,11$ ; two-  
531 tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (E) There were no differences in exploration index in the  
532 Novel Object Recognition (NOR task) ( $n=6$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (F, G)  
533 There were no differences in time spent in the open arm or the number of entries into  
534 the open arm in the Zero Maze task for anxiety-like behavior ( $n=10,11$ ; two-tailed, type 2  
535 Student's t-test). (H, I) There were no differences in distance travelled or time spent in  
536 the center arena in the Open Field task ( $n=10,11$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (J-  
537 K) Body weights and did not differ between the groups and there was no effect of  
538 treatment on total kcal intake while animals had access to early life sugar ( $n=10,11$ ; two-  
539 way repeated measures ANOVA). (L) There were no differences in body composition  
540 between rats fed early life sugar and controls ( $n=10,11$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-  
541 test). CTL=control, SUG= sugar, PN= post-natal day; data shown as mean  $\pm$  SEM.



## Figure 2



543 **Figure 2: Effect of adolescent sugar consumption on the gut microbiome in**  
544 **rats**

545 (A) Principal component analysis showing separation between fecal microbiota of rats  
546 fed early life sugar or controls (n=11, 10; dark triangles= sugar, open circles= control).

547 (B) Results from LEfSe analysis showing Linear Discriminate Analysis (LDA) scores for  
548 microbiome analysis of fecal samples of rats fed early life sugar or controls. (C) A

549 cladogram representing the results from the LEfSe analysis with class as the outer most  
550 taxonomic level and species at the inner most level. Taxa in red are elevated in the sugar

551 group. (D) Relative % abundance of fecal *Parabacteroides* were significantly elevated in  
552 rats fed early life sugar ( $P < .05$ ; n=11, 10, two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (E) Linear

553 regression of log normalized fecal *Parabacteroides* counts against shift from baseline

554 performance scores in the novel object in context task (NOIC) across all groups tested

555 (n=21). (E,F) Linear regression of the most abundant fecal *Parabacteroides* OTUs

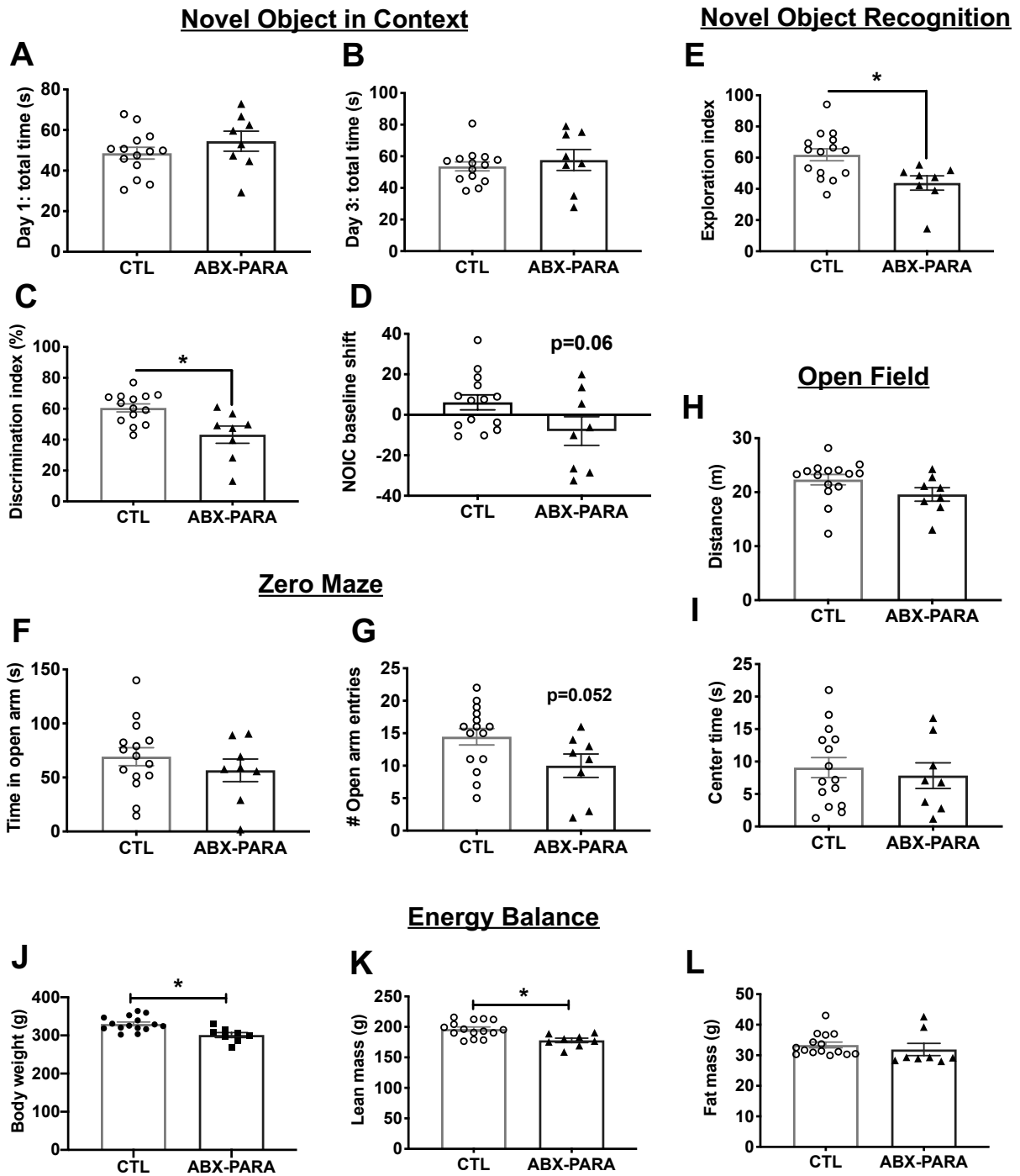
556 against shift from baseline performance scores in NOIC across all groups tested (n=21).

557 \* $P < 0.05$ ; data shown as mean  $\pm$  SEM.



Figure 3

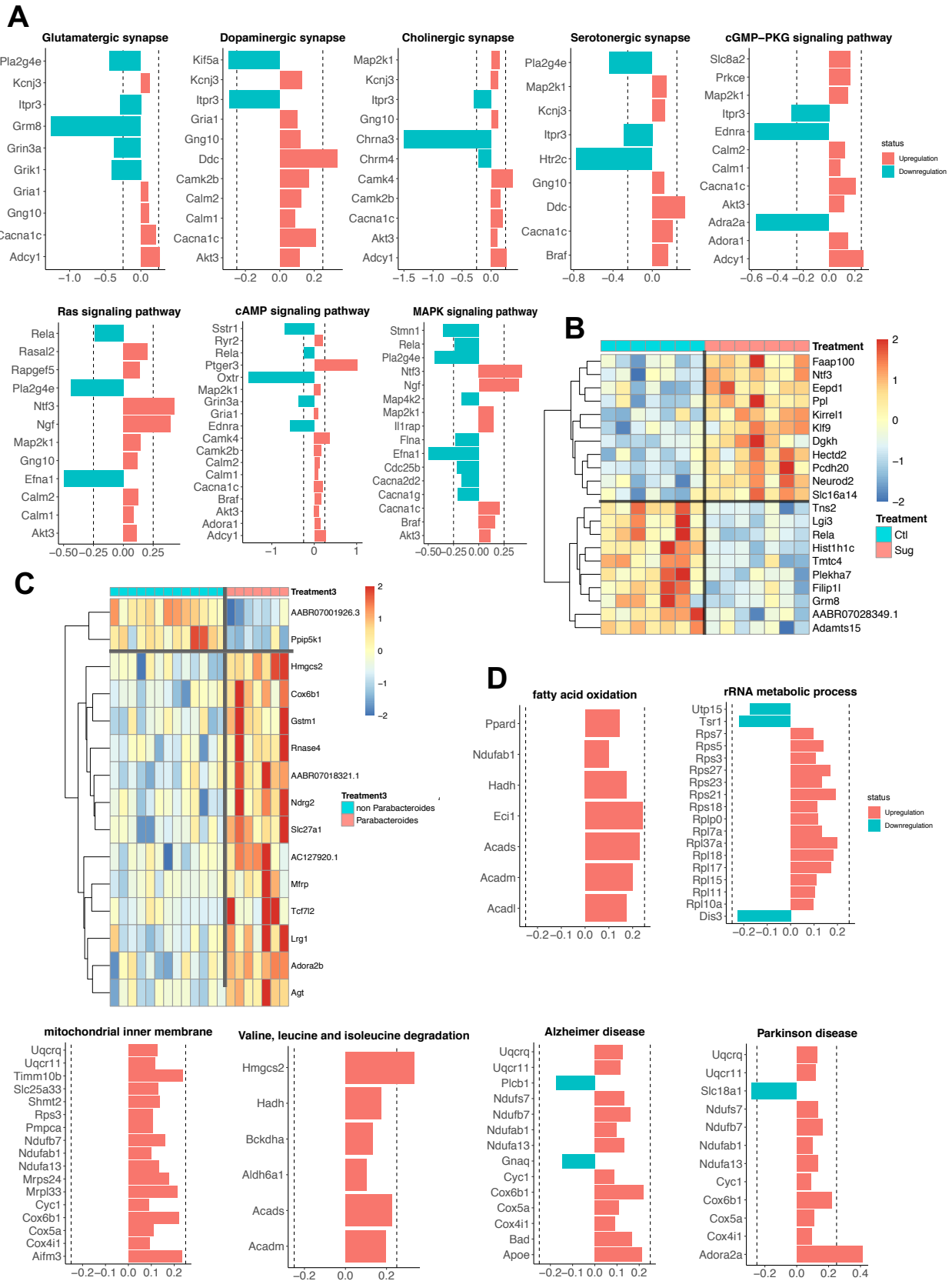
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560 **Figure 3: Early-life enrichment with *Parabacteroides* negatively impacts**  
561 **neurocognitive function** (A, B) Early-life enrichment with a 1:1 ratio of *P. johnsonii*  
562 and *P. distasonis* had no effect on total exploration time in the Novel Object in Context  
563 (NOIC) task. (C, D) Discrimination index was significantly reduced and discrimination  
564 shift from baseline tended to be reduced by enrichment with *P. johnsonii* and *P.*  
565 *distasonis*, indicating impaired hippocampal function ( $P < .05$ ,  $n=14,8$ ; two-tailed, type 2  
566 Student's T-test). (E) There was a significant reduction in the exploration index in the  
567 Novel Object Recognition (NOR task), indicating impaired perirhinal cortex function  
568 ( $P < .05$ ,  $n=14, 8$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (F, G) There were no differences in  
569 time spent in the open arm but there was a trend toward a reduced number of entries  
570 into the open arm by animals with *P. johnsonii* and *P. distasonis* enrichment in the Zero  
571 Maze task for anxiety-like behavior ( $P = .052$ ,  $n=14, 8$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-  
572 test). (H, I) There were no differences in distance travelled or time spent in the center  
573 arena in the Open Field task ( $n=14, 8$ ; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (J-L) Body  
574 weights and lean mass were significantly reduced in animals enriched with *P. johnsonii*  
575 and *P. distasonis*, but body fat did not differ between the groups ( $P < .05$ ,  $n=14, 8$ ; two-  
576 tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). CTL=control, ABX-PARA= *P. johnsonii* and *P. distasonis*  
577 enriched, PN= post-natal day; data shown as mean  $\pm$  SEM.

Figure 4



579 **Figure 4: Effect of early life sugar or targeted *Parabacteroides* enrichment**  
580 **on hippocampal gene expression** (A) Pathway analyses for differentially expressed  
581 genes (DEGs) at a p-value < 0.01 in hippocampal tissue punches from rats fed early life  
582 sugar compared with controls. Upregulation by sugar is shown in red and  
583 downregulation by sugar in blue. (B) A heatmap depicting DEGs that survived the  
584 Benjamini-Hochberg corrected FDR of  $P < 0.05$  in rats fed early life sugar compared  
585 with controls. Warmer colors (red) signify an increase in gene expression and cool  
586 colors (blue) a reduction in gene expression by treatment (CTL=control, SUG= early life  
587 sugar; n=7/group). (C) A heatmap depicting DEGs that survived the Benjamini-  
588 Hochberg corrected FDR of  $P < 0.05$  in rats with early life *Parabacteroides* enrichment  
589 compared with controls. Warmer colors (red) signify an increase in gene expression and  
590 cool colors (blue) a reduction in gene expression by treatment (n=7, 14). (D) Pathway  
591 analyses for differentially expressed genes (DEGs) at a P-value < 0.01 in rats enriched  
592 with *Parabacteroides* compared with controls. Upregulation by *Parabacteroides*  
593 transfer is shown in red and downregulation in blue. Dotted line indicates  $\pm 0.25 \log_2$   
594 fold change.

## 1 **Methods and Materials**

2

### 3 Experimental Subjects

4

5 Juvenile male Sprague Dawley rats (Envigo; arrival post natal day (PN) 26-28; 50-70g)  
6 were housed individually in standard conditions with a 12:12 light/dark cycle. All rats  
7 had ad libitum access to water and Lab Diet 5001 (PMI Nutrition International,  
8 Brentwood, MO; 29.8 % kcal from protein, 13.4% kcal from fat, 56.7% kcal from  
9 carbohydrate), with modifications where noted. All experiments were performed in  
10 accordance with the approval of the Animal Care and Use Committee at the University  
11 of Southern California.

12

#### 13 Experiment 1

14 Twenty one juvenile male rats (PN 26-28) were divided into two groups with equal body  
15 weight and given ad libitum access to: 1) 11% weight-by-volume (w/v) solution  
16 containing monosaccharide ratio of 65% fructose and 35% glucose in reverse osmosis-  
17 filtered water (SUG;  $n=11$ ) or 2) or an extra bottle of reverse osmosis-filtered water  
18 (CTL;  $n=10$ ). This solution was chosen to model commonly consumed sugar-sweetened  
19 beverages in humans in terms of both caloric content and monosaccharide ratio<sup>1</sup>.  
20 Additionally, all rats were given ad libitum access to water and standard rat chow. Food  
21 intake, solution intake and body weights were monitored thrice weekly except where  
22 prohibited due to behavioral testing. At PN 60, rats underwent Novel Object in Context  
23 (NOIC) testing, to measure hippocampal-dependent episodic contextual memory. At PN  
24 67 rats underwent anxiety testing in the Zero Maze, followed by body composition

25 testing at PN 70 and an intraperitoneal glucose tolerance test (IP GTT) at PN 84. Fecal  
26 and cecal samples were collected prior to sacrifice at PN 104 (for details on all  
27 procedures, see supplemental materials).

28

29 In a separate cohort of juvenile male rats (n=8/group) animals were treated as above,  
30 but on PD day 60 rats were tested in the Novel Object Recognition (NOR) and Open  
31 Field (OF) tasks, with two days in between tasks. Animals were sacrificed and tissue  
32 punches were collected from the dorsal hippocampus on PN day 65. Tissue punches  
33 were flash frozen in isopentane packed in dry ice and stored at -80°C until further  
34 analyses.

35

### 36 Experiment 2

37 Twenty-three juvenile male rats (PN 26-28) were divided into two groups and received a  
38 gavage twice daily (12 hours apart) for 7 days (only one treatment was given on day 7) of  
39 either (1) saline (SAL; n=8), or (2) a cocktail of antibiotics consisting of Vancomycin (50  
40 mg/kg), Neomycin (100 mg/kg), and Metronidazole (100 mg/kg) along with 1 mg/mL of  
41 ampicillin in their drinking water (ABX; n=15), which is a protocol modified from <sup>2</sup>.

42 Animals were housed in fresh, sterile cages on Day 3 of the antibiotic or saline  
43 treatment, and again switched to fresh sterile cages on Day 7 after the final gavage. All  
44 animals were maintained on sterile, autoclaved water and chow for the remainder of the  
45 experiment. Rats in the ABX group were given water instead of ampicillin solution on  
46 Day 7. Animals in the ABX group were further subdivided to receive either gavage of a  
47 1:1 ratio of *Parabacteroides distasonis* and *Parabacteroides johnsonii* (PARA; n=8) or  
48 saline (SAL; n=7) thirty six hours after the last ABX treatment. To minimize potential

49 contamination, rats were handled minimally for 14 days. Cage changes occurred once  
50 weekly at which time animals and food were weighed. Experimenters wore fresh, sterile  
51 PPE and weigh boxes were cleaned with sterilizing solution in between each cage  
52 change. On PN 50 rats were tested in NOIC, on PN 60 rats were tested in NOR, on PN  
53 62 rats were tested in the Zero Maze, followed by Open Field on PN 64. On PN 73 rats  
54 were given an IP GTT, and on PN 76 body composition was tested. Rats were sacrificed  
55 at PN 83 and dorsal hippocampus tissue punches were collected on PN day 65. Tissue  
56 punches were flash frozen in isopentane packed in dry ice and stored at -80°C until  
57 further analyses.

58

#### 59 IP glucose tolerance test (IP GTT)

60 Animals were food restricted 24 hours prior to IP GTT. Immediately prior to the test,  
61 baseline blood glucose readings were obtained from tail tip and recorded by a blood  
62 glucose meter (One touch Ultra2, LifeScan Inc., Milpitas, CA). Each animal was then  
63 intraperitoneally (IP) injected with dextrose solution (0.923g/ml by body weight) and  
64 tail tip blood glucose readings were obtained at 30, 60, 90, and 120 min after IP  
65 injections, as previously described <sup>3</sup>.

66

#### 67 Zero Maze

68 The Zero Maze is an elevated circular track (63.5 cm fall height, 116.8cm outside  
69 diameter), divided into four equal length sections. Two sections were open with 3 cm  
70 high curbs, whereas the 2 other closed sections contained 17.5 cm high walls. Animals  
71 are placed in the maze facing the open section of the track in a room with ambient  
72 lighting for 5 min while the experimenter watches the animal from a monitor outside of

73 the room. The experimenter records the total time spent in the open sections (defined as  
74 the head and front two paws in open arms), and the number of crosses into the open  
75 sections from the closed sections.

76

#### 77 Novel object in context task (NOIC)

78 NOIC measures episodic contextual memory based on the capacity for an animal to  
79 identify which of two familiar objects it has never seen before in a specific context.  
80 Procedures were adapted from prior reports <sup>4,5</sup>. Briefly, rats are habituated to two  
81 distinct contexts on subsequent days (with the habituation order counterbalanced by  
82 group) for 5-min sessions: Context 1 is a semi-transparent box (15in W x 24in L x 12in  
83 H) with orange stripes and Context 2 is a grey opaque box (17in W x 17in L x 16in H)  
84 (Context identify assignments counterbalanced by group). Day 1 of NOIC begins with  
85 each animal being placed in Context 1 containing two distinct objects placed in opposite  
86 corners: a 500ml jar filled with blue water (Object A) and a square glass container  
87 (Object B) (Object assignments counterbalanced by group). On day 2 of NOIC, animals  
88 are placed in Context 2 with duplicates of one of the objects. On NOIC day 3, rats are  
89 placed in Context 2 with Objects A and Object B. One of these objects is not novel to the  
90 rat, but its placement in Context 2 is novel. All sessions are 5 minutes long and are video  
91 recorded. The time spent investigating each object is recorded from the video recordings  
92 by an experimenter who is blinded to the treatment groups. Exploration is defined as  
93 sniffing or touching the object with the nose or forepaws. The task is scored by  
94 calculating the time spent exploring the Novel Object to the context divided by the time  
95 spent exploring both Objects A and B combined, which is the novelty or “discrimination  
96 index”. Rats with an intact hippocampus will preferentially investigate the object that is



97 novel to Context 2, given that this object is a familiar object yet is now presented in a  
98 novel context, whereas hippocampal inactivation impairs the preferential investigation  
99 of the object novel to Context 2 4.

100

#### 101 Novel Object Recognition

102 The apparatus used for NOR is a grey opaque box (17in W x 17in L x 16in H). Procedures  
103 are adapted from <sup>6</sup>. Rats are habituated to the empty arena and conditions for 10  
104 minutes on the day prior to testing. The test begins with a 5 minute familiarization  
105 phase, where rats are placed in the center of the arena with two identical copies of the  
106 same object to explore. The objects were either two identical cans or two identical  
107 bottles, counterbalanced by treatment group. Animals are then removed from the arena  
108 and placed in the home cage for 5 minutes. The arena and objects are cleaned with 10%  
109 ethanol solution, and one of the objects in the arena is replaced with a different one  
110 (either the can or bottle, whichever the animal has not previously seen, i.e., the “novel  
111 object”). Animals are again placed in the center of the arena and allowed to explore for 3  
112 minutes. Time spent exploring the objects is recorded via video recording and analyzed  
113 using Any-maze activity tracking software (Stoelting Co., Wood Dale, IL).

114

#### 115 Open Field

116 Open field measures general activity level and also anxiety in the rat. A large gray bin,  
117 60 cm (L) X 56 CM (W) is placed under diffuse even lighting (30 lux). A center zone is  
118 identified and marked in the bin (19 cm L X 17.5 cm W). A video camera is placed  
119 directly overhead and animals are tracked using AnyMaze Software (Stoelting Co.,  
120 Wood Dale, IL). Animals are placed in the center of the box facing the back wall and

121 allowed to explore the arena for 10 min while the experimenter watches from a monitor  
122 in an adjacent room. The apparatus is cleaned with 10% ethanol after each rat is tested.

123

#### 124 Body Composition

125 Body composition (body fat, lean mass) was measured using LF90 time domain nuclear  
126 magnetic resonance (Bruker NMR minispec LF 90II, Bruker Daltonics, Inc.).

127

#### 128 Bacterial transfer

129 *Parabacteroides distasonis* (ATCC 8503) was cultured under anaerobic conditions at  
130 37C in Reinforced Clostridial Medium (RCM, BD Biosciences). *Parabacteroides*  
131 *johnsonii* (DSM 18315) was grown in anaerobic conditions in PYG medium (modified,  
132 DSM medium 104). Cultures were authenticated by full-length 16S rRNA gene  
133 sequencing. For bacterial enrichment, 10<sup>9</sup> colony-forming units of both *P. distasonis*  
134 and *P. johnsonii* were suspended in 500 uL pre-reduced PBS and orally gavaged into  
135 antibiotic-treated rats. When co-administered, a ratio of 1:1 was used for *P. distasonis*  
136 and *P. johnsonii*.

137

#### 138 Gut microbiota DNA extraction and 16s rRNA gene sequencing

139 All samples were extracted and sequenced according to the guidelines and procedures  
140 established by the Earth Microbiome Project <sup>7</sup>. DNA was extracted from fecal and cecal  
141 samples using the MO BIO PowerSoil DNA extraction kit. PCR targeting the V4 region  
142 of the 16S rRNA bacterial gene was performed with the 515F/806R primers, utilizing the  
143 protocol described in Caporaso et al.<sup>8</sup>. Amplicons were barcoded and pooled in equal  
144 concentrations for sequencing. The amplicon pool was purified with the MO BIO

145 UltraClean PCR Clean-up kit and sequenced by the 2 x 150bp MiSeq platform at the  
146 Institute for Genomic Medicine at UCSD. All sequences were deposited in Qiita Study  
147 11255 as raw FASTQ files. Sequences were demultiplexed using Qiime-1 based “split  
148 libraries” with the forward reads only dropping. Demultiplexed sequences were then  
149 trimmed evenly to 100 bp and 150 bp to enable comparison to other studies for  
150 metaanalysis. Trimmed sequences were matched to known OTUs at 97% identity.

151

### 152 Hippocampal RNA extraction and sequencing

153 Hippocampi from rats treated with or without sugar or *Parabacteroides* were subject to  
154 RNA-seq analysis. Total RNA was extracted according to manufacturer’s instructions  
155 using RNeasy Lipid Tissue Mini Kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany). Total RNA was checked  
156 for degradation in a Bioanalyzer 2100 (Agilent, Santa Clara, CA, USA). Quality was very  
157 high for all samples, and libraries were prepared from 1 ug of total RNA using a NuGen  
158 Universal Plus mRNA-seq Library Prep Kit (Tecan Genomics Inc. Redwood City, CA).  
159 Final library products were quantified using the Qubit 2.0 Fluorometer (Thermo Fisher  
160 Scientific Inc., Waltham, MA, USA), and the fragment size distribution was determined  
161 with the Bioanalyzer 2100. The libraries were then pooled equimolarly, and the final  
162 pool was quantified via qPCR using the Kapa Biosystems Library Quantification Kit,  
163 according to manufacturer’s instructions. The pool was sequenced in an Illumina  
164 NextSeq 550 platform (Illumina, San Diego, CA, USA), in Single-Read 75 cycles format,  
165 obtaining about 25 million reads per sample. The preparation of the libraries and the  
166 sequencing was performed at the USC Genome Core (<http://uscgenomecore.usc.edu/>)

167

### 168 RNA-seq quality control

169 Data quality checks were performed using the FastQC tool  
170 (<http://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc>) and low quality reads  
171 were trimmed with Trim\_Galore  
172 ([http://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/trim\\_galore/](http://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/trim_galore/)). RNA-seq reads  
173 passing quality control were mapped to *Rattus norvegicus* transcriptome (Rnor6) and  
174 quantified with Salmon<sup>9</sup>. Salmon directly mapped RNA-seq reads to Rat transcriptome  
175 and quantified transcript counts. Txiimport<sup>10</sup> were used to convert transcript counts  
176 into gene counts. Potential sample outliers were detected by principle component  
177 analysis (PCA) and one control and one treatment sample from the *Parabacteroides*  
178 experiment were deemed outliers (Supplementary Figure 6A, B) and removed.

179

#### 180 Identification of differentially expressed genes (DEGs)

181 DESeq2<sup>11</sup> were used to conduct differential gene expression analysis between sugar  
182 treatment and the corresponding controls, or between *Parabacteroides* treatment and  
183 the corresponding controls. Low-abundance genes were filtered out and only those  
184 having a mean raw count > 1 in more than 50% of the samples were included.

185 Differentially expressed genes were detected by DESeq2 with default settings.

186 Significant DEGs were defined as Benjamini-Hochberg (BH) adjusted false discovery  
187 rate (FDR) < 0.05. For heatmap visualization, genes were normalized with variance  
188 stabilization transformation implemented in DESeq2, followed by calculating a z-score  
189 for each gene.

190

#### 191 Pathway analyses of DEGs

192 For the pathway analyses, DEGs at p-value < 0.01 was used. Pathway enrichment  
193 analysis were conducted using enrichr<sup>12</sup> by intersecting each signature with pathways or  
194 gene sets from KEGG<sup>13</sup>, gene ontology biological pathways (GOBP), Cellular Component  
195 (GOCP), Molecular Function (GOMF)<sup>14</sup> and Wikipathways<sup>15</sup>. Pathways at FDR < 0.05  
196 were considered significant. Unless otherwise specified, R 3.5.2 was used for the  
197 analysis mentioned in the RNA sequencing section.

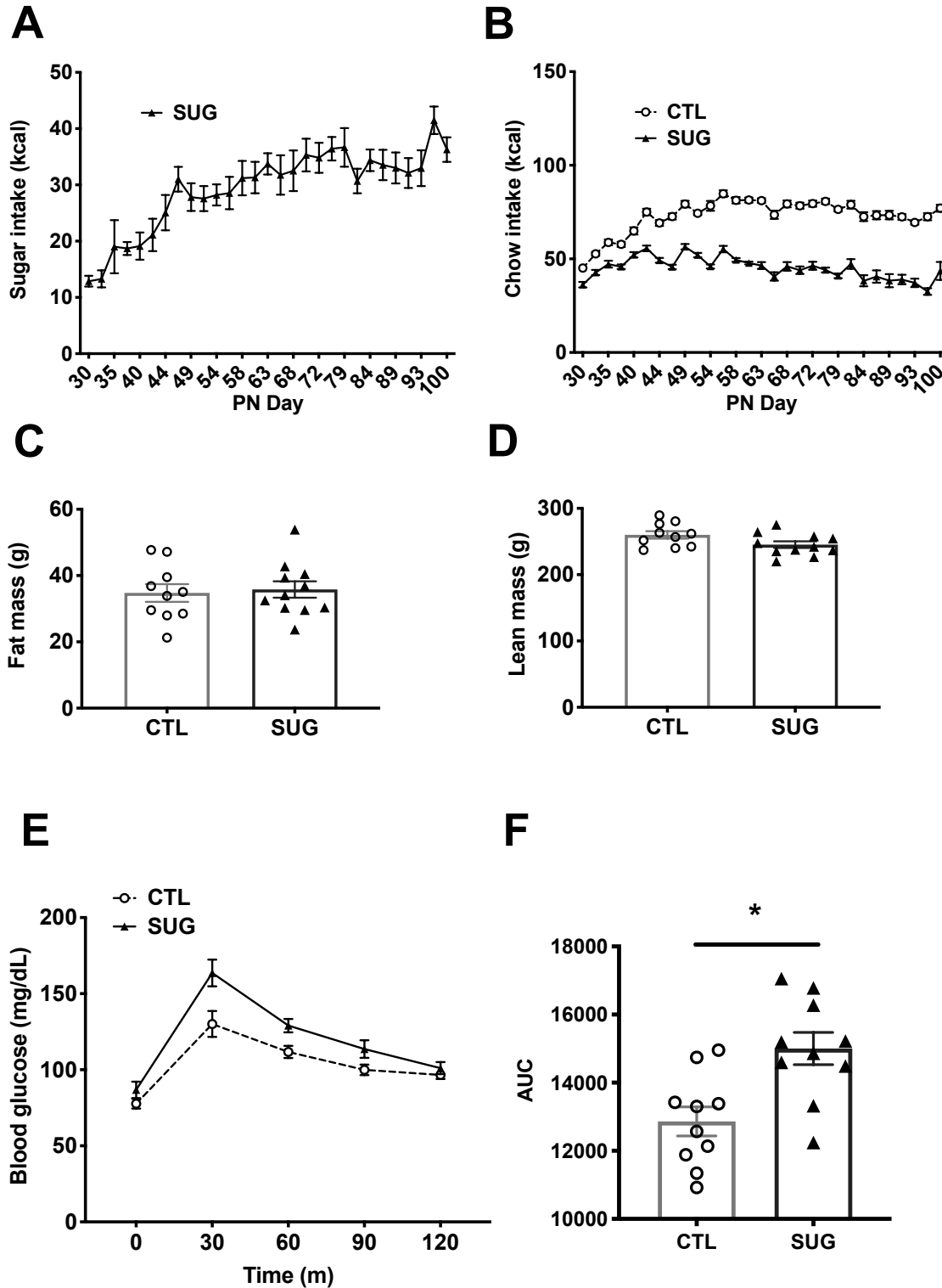
198  
199 Additional Statistical methods

200 Data are presented as means ± SEM. For analytic comparisons of body weight, total food  
201 intake, and chow intake, groups were compared using repeated measures ANOVA in  
202 Prism software (GraphPad Inc., version 8.0). When significant differences were  
203 detected, Sidak post-hoc test for multiple comparisons was used. Area under the curve  
204 (AUC) for the IP GTT testing was also calculated using Prism. All other statistical  
205 analyses were performed using Student's two-tailed unpaired t tests in excel software  
206 (Microsoft Inc., version 15.26). For all analyses, statistical significance was set at  
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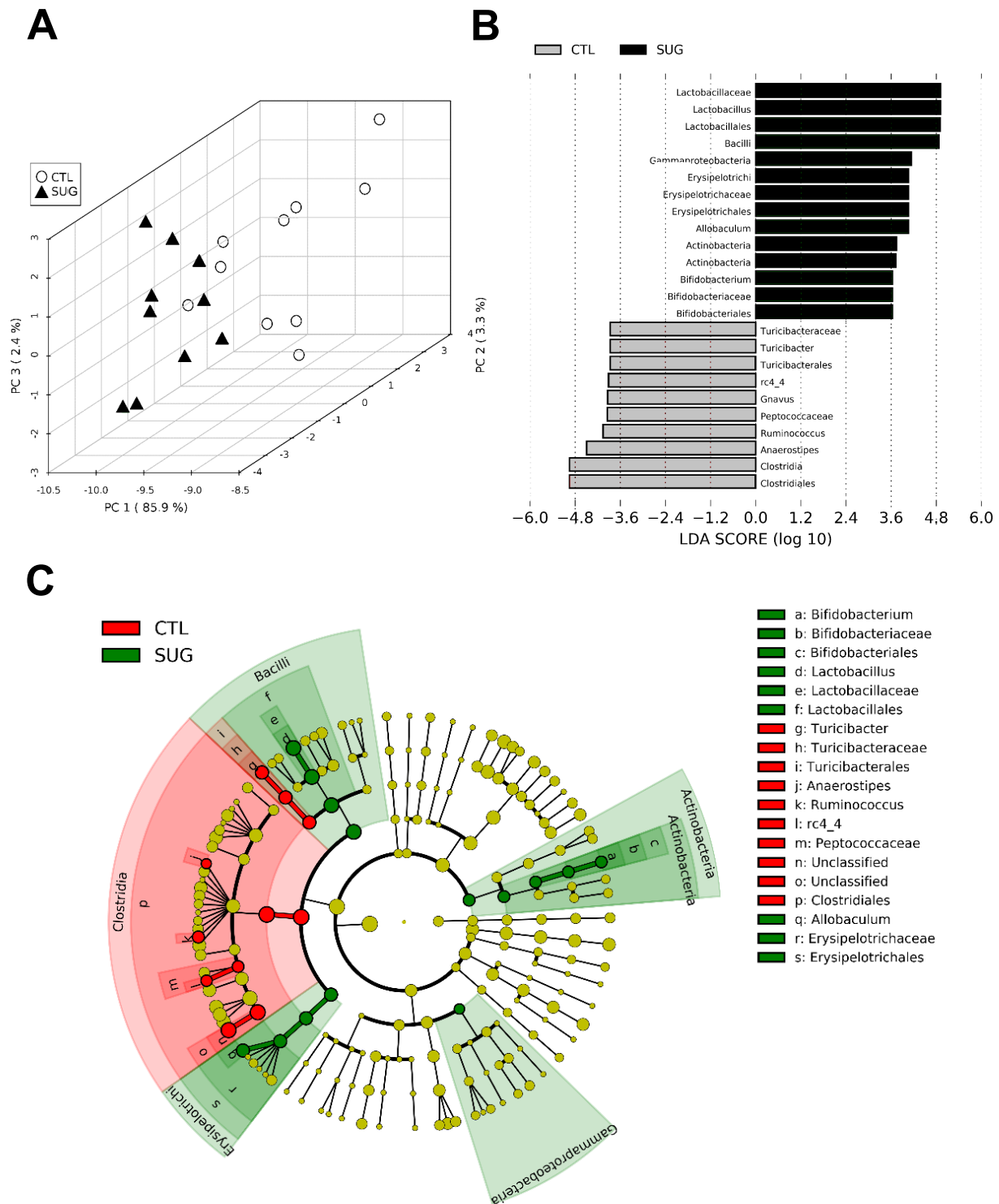
Extended Data Fig. 1



2 **Extended Data Fig. 1 Effect of early life sugar consumption on food intake**  
3 **and metabolic measures** (A) kcals from sugar over the feeding period beginning at  
4 post-natal day (PN) 28 with the first measurement taken on PN 30 (n=11). (B) Kcals  
5 from chow intake were lower throughout the feeding period in animals fed early life  
6 sugar (n=10,11). (C, D) there were no differences in fat mass or lean mass (n=10,11; two-  
7 tailed, type 2 Student's T-test). (E, F) Results from the intraperitoneal glucose tolerance  
8 test show an elevated area under the curve (AUC) in rodents fed sugar solutions during  
9 early life (n=10,11; two-tailed, type 2 Student's T-test;  $P < .05$ ). CTL=control, SUG=  
10 sugar, PN= post-natal day; data shown as mean  $\pm$  SEM.

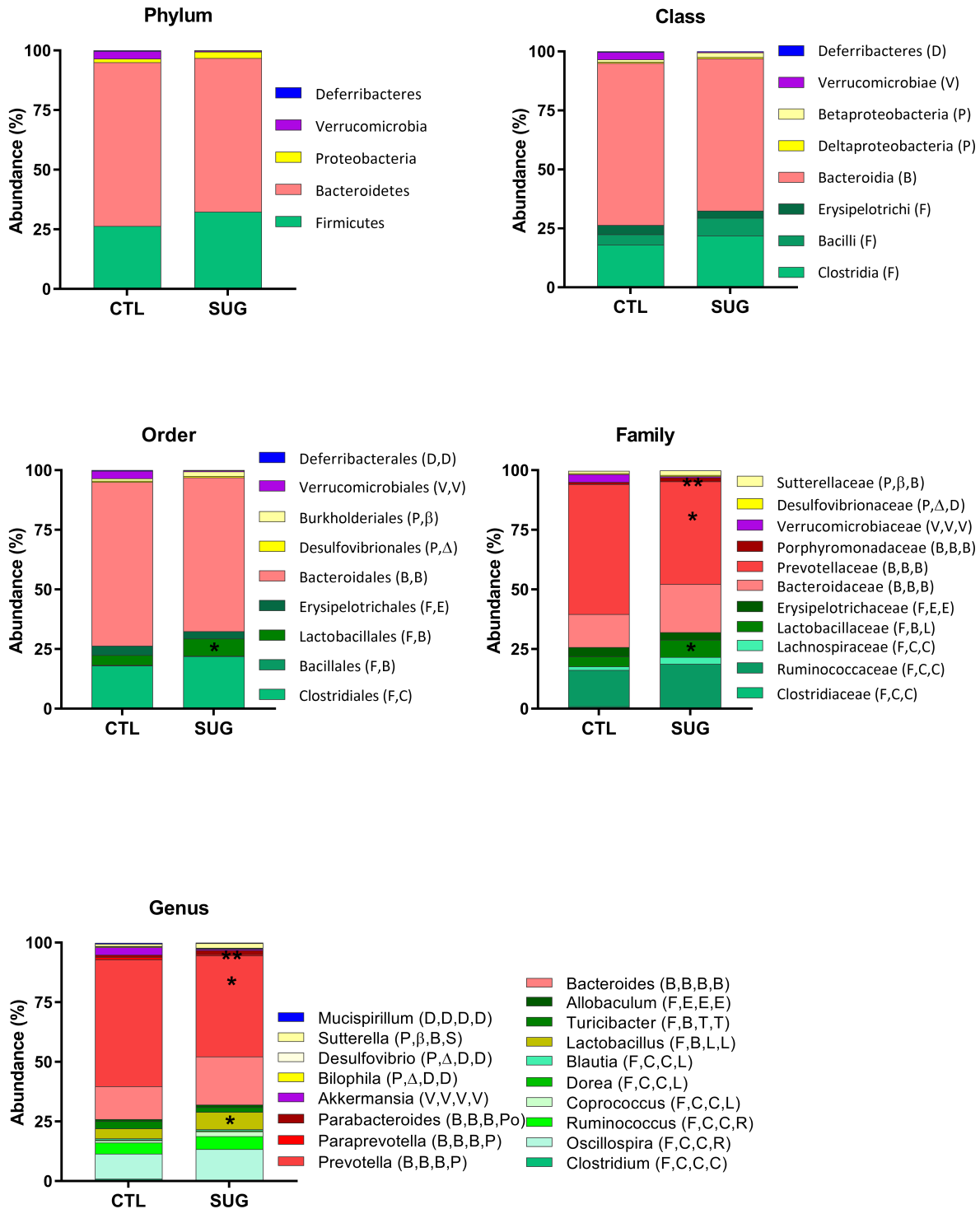


Extended Data Fig. 2



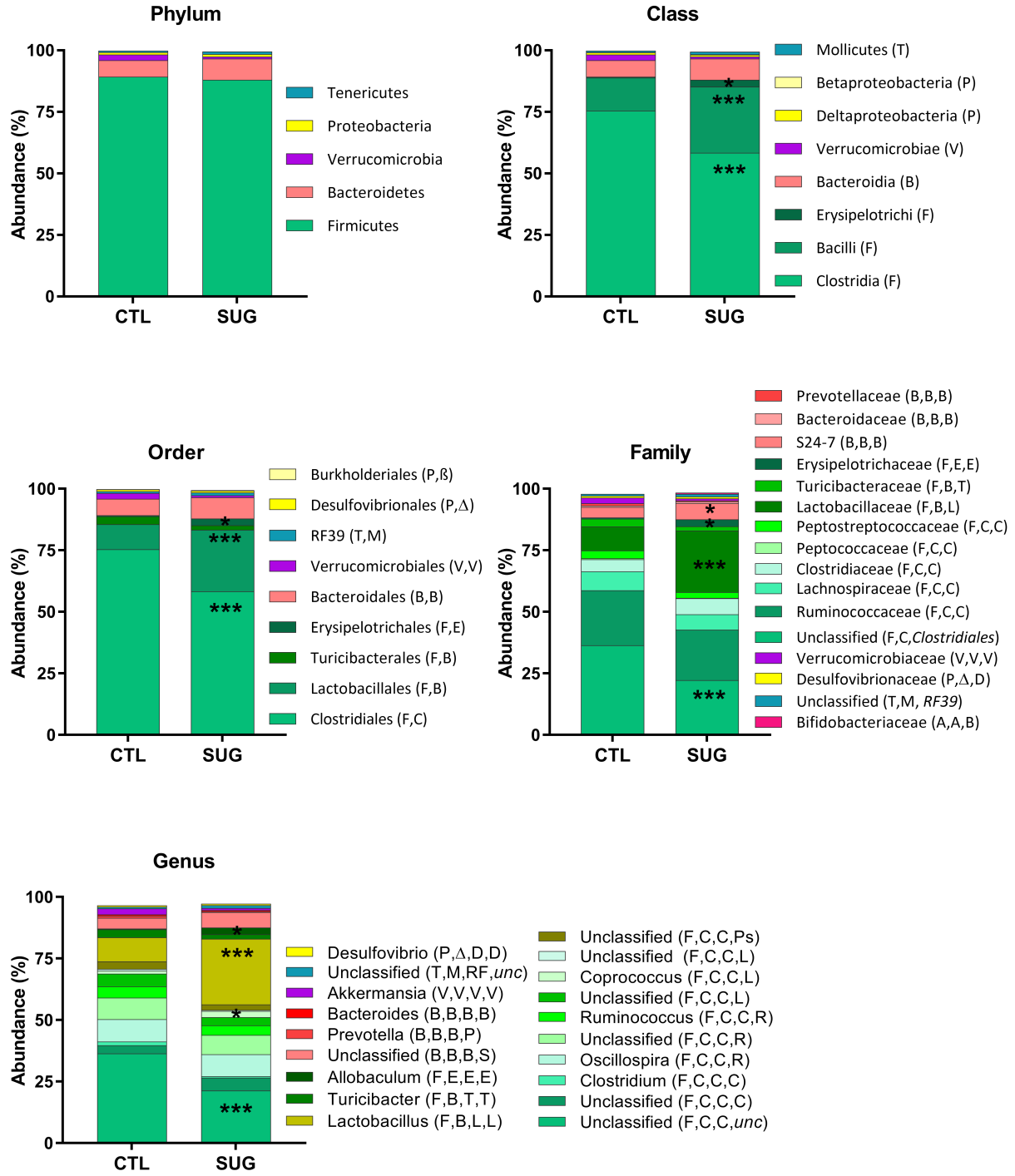
12 **Extended Data Fig. 2 Effect of early life sugar consumption on the rat cecal**  
13 **microbiota** (A) Principal component analysis (PCA) was run using all phylogenic levels  
14 (112 normalized taxa abundances) and shows different clustering patterns based on  
15 overall cecal microbial profiles. (B) Linear discriminant analysis (LDA) Effect Size  
16 (LEfSe), run using the GALAXY platform, identified characteristic features of the cecal  
17 microbiota of rats fed a control diet or early life sugar. Relative differences among  
18 groups were used to rank the features with the LDA score set at 2. (C) Identified taxa are  
19 displayed by scores and on a phylogenic cladogram. CTL=control, SUG= sugar.

### Extended Data Fig. 3



21 **Extended Data Fig. 3 Effect of early life sugar consumption on the rat fecal**  
22 **microbiota.** Filtered bacterial abundances by taxonomic levels phylum, class, order,  
23 family, genus in fecal samples from rats fed a control diets or early life sugar.  
24 Differences in abundances were assessed by Mann-Whitney non-parametric test. \*  
25  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . CTL=control, SUG= sugar.

Extended Data Fig. 4



27 **Extended Data Fig. 4 Effect of early life sugar consumption on the rat cecal**

28 **microbiota:** Filtered bacterial abundances by taxonomic levels phylum, class, order,

29 family, genus in cecal samples from rats fed a control diets or early life sugar.

30 Differences in abundances were assessed by Mann-Whitney non-parametric test. \*

31  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . CTL=control, SUG= sugar.

32

33

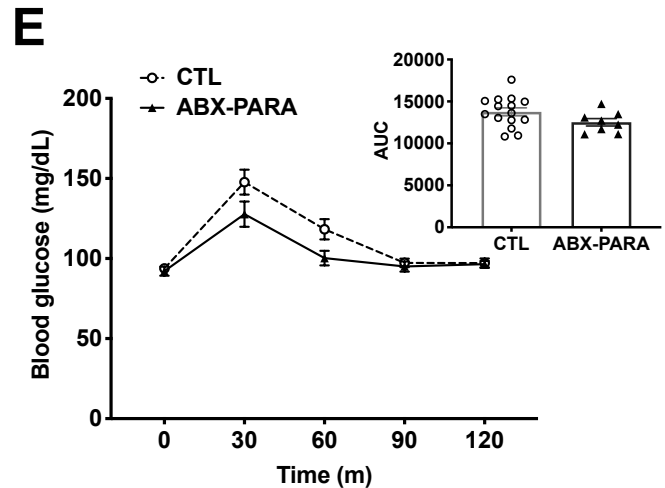
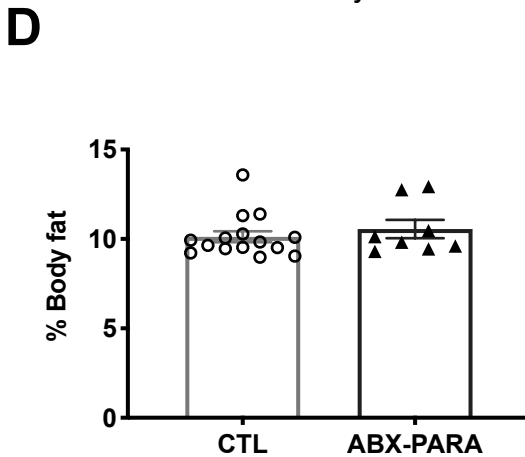
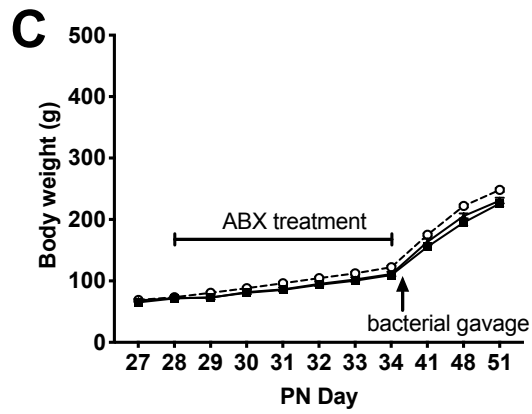
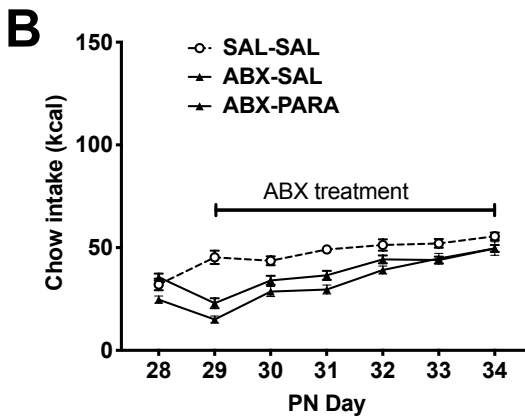
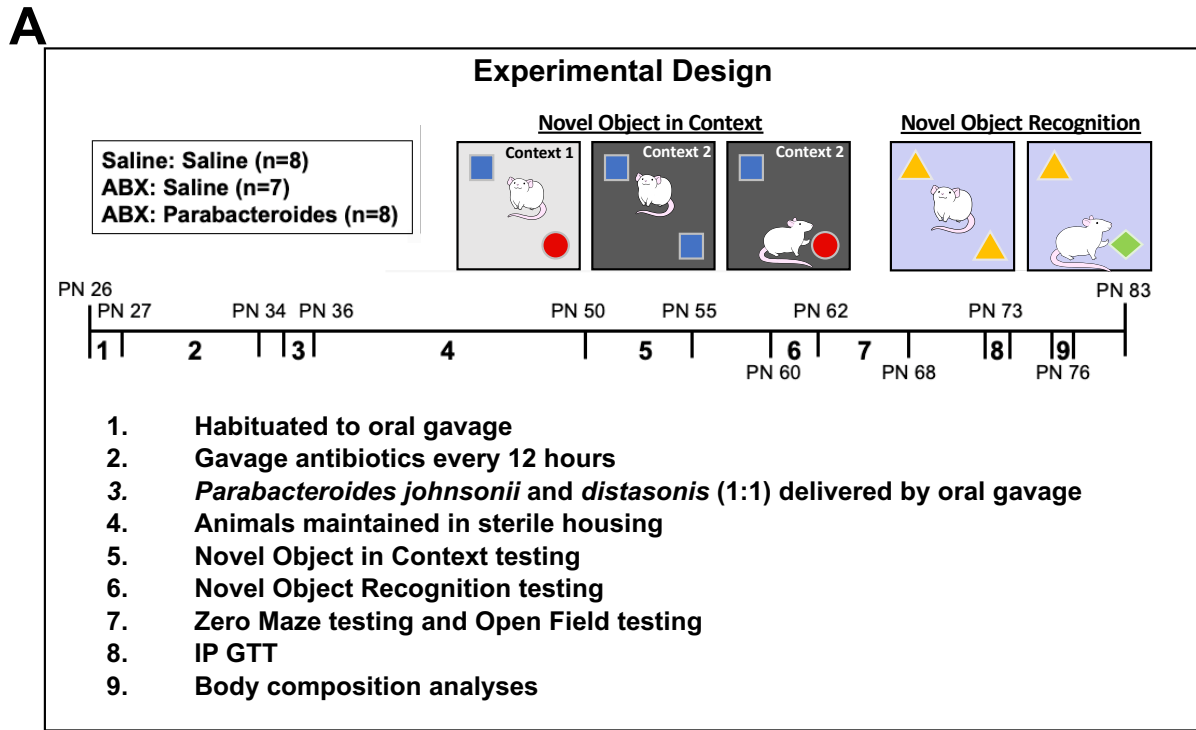
34

35 *Phylogenic taxonomy legend:*

| Phylum                          | Class                           | Order                          | Family                             | Genus  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| F<br><i>Firmicutes</i>          | C<br><i>Clostridia</i>          | C<br><i>Clostridiales</i>      | C<br><i>Clostridiaceae</i>         | <i>Clostridium</i>                                   |
|                                 |                                 |                                | L<br><i>Lachnospiraceae</i>        | <i>Coprococcus</i><br><i>Blautia</i><br><i>Dorea</i> |
|                                 |                                 |                                | P<br><i>Peptococcaceae</i>         |  |
|                                 |                                 |                                | Ps<br><i>Peptostreptococcaceae</i> |  |
|                                 |                                 |                                | R<br><i>Ruminococcaceae</i>        | <i>Oscillospira</i><br><i>Ruminococcus</i>           |
|                                 | B<br><i>Bacilli</i>             | L<br><i>Lactobacillales</i>    | L<br><i>Lactobacillaceae</i>       | <i>Lactobacillus</i>                                 |
|                                 |                                 |                                | T<br><i>Turicibacterales</i>       | <i>Turicibacteraceae</i><br><i>Turicibacter</i>      |
|                                 |                                 |                                | B<br><i>Bacillales</i>             |  |
|                                 |                                 | E<br><i>Erysipelotrichi</i>    | E<br><i>Erysipelotrichales</i>     | E<br><i>Erysipelotrichaceae</i>                      |
|                                 | B<br><i>Bacteroidetes</i>       | B<br><i>Bacteroidia</i>        | B<br><i>Bacteroidales</i>          | S<br><i>S24-7</i>                                    |
| B<br><i>Bacteroidaceae</i>      |                                 |                                |                                    | <i>Bacteroides</i>                                   |
| P<br><i>Prevotellaceae</i>      |                                 |                                |                                    | <i>Prevotella</i><br><i>Paraprevotella</i>           |
| Po<br><i>Porphyromonadaceae</i> |                                 |                                |                                    | <i>Parabacteroides</i>                               |
| V<br><i>Verrucomicrobia</i>     |                                 |                                |                                    | V<br><i>Verrucomicrobiae</i>                         |
| P<br><i>Proteobacteria</i>      | β<br><i>Betaproteobacteria</i>  | B<br><i>Burkholderiales</i>    | S<br><i>Sutterellaceae</i>         | <i>Sutterella</i>                                    |
|                                 | Δ<br><i>Deltaproteobacteria</i> | D<br><i>Desulfovibrionales</i> | D<br><i>Desulfovibrionaceae</i>    | <i>Desulfovibrio</i><br><i>Bilophila</i>             |
| T<br><i>Tenericutes</i>         | M<br><i>Mollicutes</i>          | RF<br><i>RF39</i>              |                                    |  |
| D<br><i>Deferribacteres</i>     | D<br><i>Deferribacteres</i>     | D<br><i>Deferribacterales</i>  | D<br><i>Deferribacteraceae</i>     | <i>Mucispirillum</i>                                 |
| A<br><i>Actinobacteria</i>      | A<br><i>Actinobacteria</i>      | B<br><i>Bifidobacter</i>       | B<br><i>Bifidobacteriaceae</i>     |  |

36

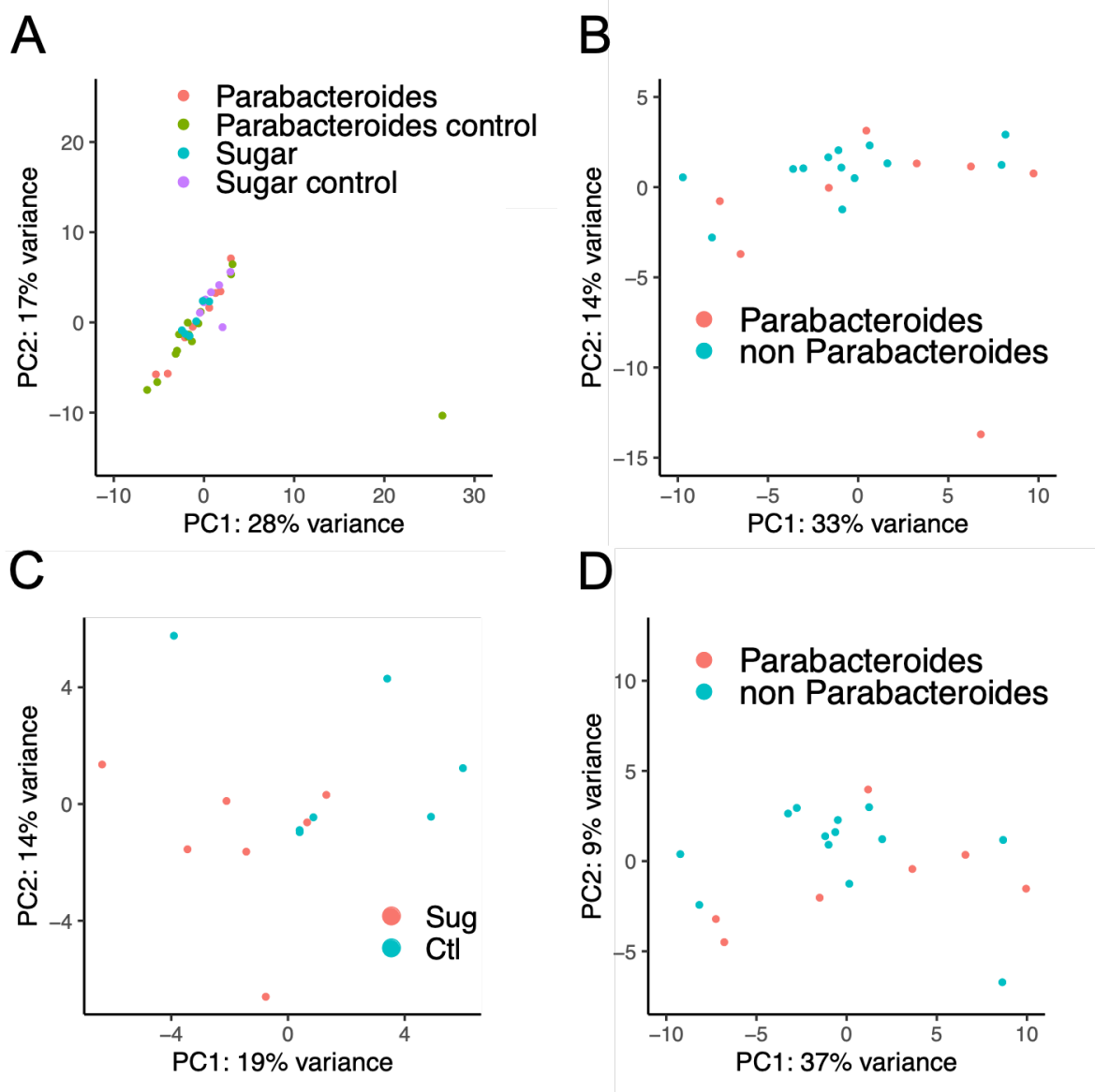
Extended Data Fig. 5



38 **Extended Data Fig. 5. Experimental design, food intake, and metabolic**  
39 **measures for gut *Parabacteroides* enrichment** (A) Schematic showing the  
40 timeline for the experimental design of the *Parabacteroides* transfer experiment. (B)  
41 Effect of antibiotic treatment on food intake (C) and body weight. (D) Effect of gut  
42 *Parabacteroides* enrichment on body composition 30 days post treatment (n=15, 8,  
43 n.s.). (E) Effect of gut *Parabacteroides* enrichment blood glucose levels during an  
44 interaperitoneal glucose tolerance test (IP GTT) (n=15, 8, n.s.) CTL=control, ABX-  
45 PARA= *Parabacteroides* enriched, PN= post-natal day; data shown as mean  $\pm$  SEM.



## Extended Data Fig. 6



46

47 **Extended Data Fig. 6. Principal component analyses (PCA) of hippocampal**

48 **gene expression data to identify outliers (A) PCA identified one control sample (red**

49 **arrow) as an outlier when all samples from both sugar and *Parabacteroides* enrichment**

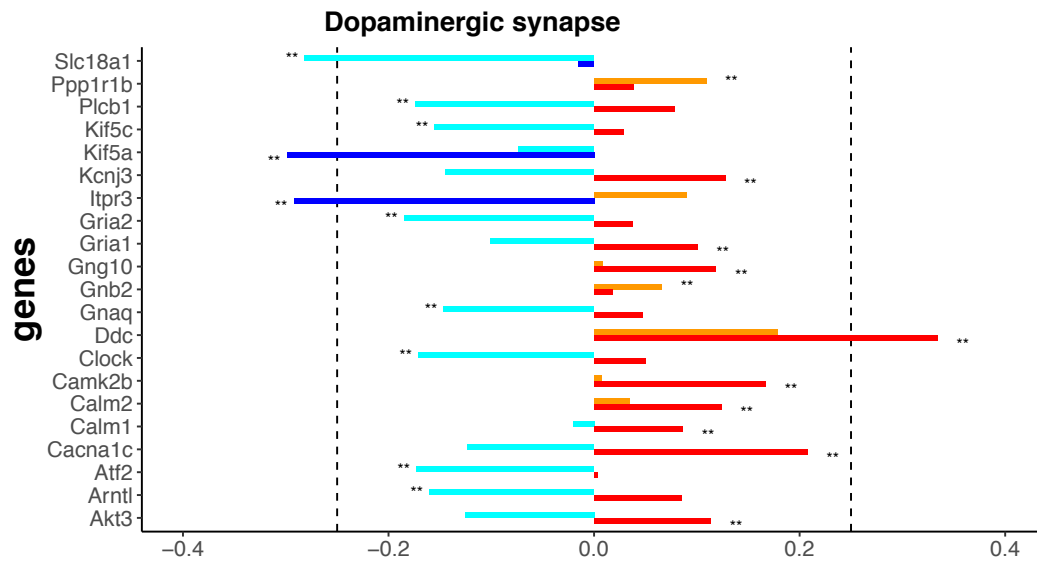
50 **experiments were considered. (B) PCA identified one treatment sample (red arrow) from the**

51 ***Parabacteroides* experiment as an outlier. After removing the outliers, PCA for the remaining**

52 **samples from the sugar treatment experiment (C) and those from the *Parabacteroides***

53 **enrichment experiments (D).**

## Extended Data Fig. 7



54

55

56 **Extended Data Fig 7. Comparison of hippocampal gene expression pathways altered by**

57 **sugar and *Parabacteroides*** The dopaminergic synapse pathway overlaps in the sugar and

58 *Parabacteroides* transfer experiments. Red= upregulated by sugar, dark blue= downregulated by

59 sugar, orange= upregulated by *Parabacteroides*, light blue= downregulated by

60 *Parabacteroides*. \*  $P < 0.05$  and \*\*  $P < 0.01$ . Dotted line indicated  $\pm 0.25$  log<sub>2</sub> fold change.

**Table 1**

| Term   | Overlap | P.value              | Adjusted.P.value     | Odds.Ratio  | Combined.Score |
|--|---------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| cAMP signaling pathway                                 | 18/211  | 9.08710002926925e-07 | 0.000275339130886858 | 3.922209511 | 54.56279715    |
| Long-term potentiation                                 | 10/67   | 1.75113958513324e-06 | 0.000265297647147685 | 6.862240522 | 90.96067106    |
| Vascular smooth muscle contraction                     | 14/140  | 2.31824837751272e-06 | 0.000234143086128785 | 4.597701149 | 59.65378698    |
| Oxytocin signaling pathway                             | 14/154  | 7.11610557675168e-06 | 0.000539044997438939 | 4.179728318 | 49.54294651    |
| Circadian entrainment                                  | 11/99   | 1.02664310479357e-05 | 0.000622145721504906 | 5.108556833 | 58.68010783    |
| Amphetamine addiction                                  | 9/68    | 1.58699502114579e-05 | 0.000801432485678624 | 6.085192698 | 67.24797055    |
| Calcium signaling pathway                              | 15/189  | 1.74937542122293e-05 | 0.000757229646615067 | 3.648969166 | 39.96959184    |
| Cholinergic synapse                                    | 11/113  | 3.60773936379843e-05 | 0.00136643128403866  | 4.475638287 | 45.78508194    |
| Axon guidance  | 14/180  | 4.14870567165781e-05 | 0.00139673090945813  | 3.575989783 | 36.08219845    |
| Apelin signaling pathway                               | 12/138  | 4.9577399145753e-05  | 0.00150219519411632  | 3.998001    | 39.62808792    |
| Neurotrophin signaling pathway                         | 11/121  | 6.78430713999647e-05 | 0.00186876823947175  | 4.179728318 | 40.11834187    |
| Dopaminergic synapse                                   | 11/135  | 0.000181335935857366 | 0.00457873238039848  | 3.746275011 | 32.2747558     |
| Glutamatergic synapse                                  | 10/114  | 0.000194050732212181 | 0.00452287475848392  | 4.033071184 | 34.47223604    |
| Aldosterone synthesis and secretion                    | 9/102   | 0.0003852671882922   | 0.00833828271803832  | 4.056795132 | 31.89279298    |
| cGMP-PKG signaling pathway                             | 12/172  | 0.000397324053301256 | 0.00802594587668537  | 3.207698476 | 25.11871164    |
| Inflammatory mediator regulation of TRP channels       | 10/127  | 0.000464586599843255 | 0.00879810873453165  | 3.620237126 | 27.78301233    |
| MAPK signaling pathway                                 | 16/294  | 0.000759189930175949 | 0.0135314440496066   | 2.502150285 | 17.97359249    |
| GnRH signaling pathway                                 | 8/90    | 0.000767481845084928 | 0.0129192777255963   | 4.086845466 | 29.31247298    |
| Glioma   | 7/75    | 0.0012196493427778   | 0.0194501974137724   | 4.291187739 | 28.79040196    |
| Renin secretion  | 7/76    | 0.00131872717084366  | 0.0199787166382814   | 4.234724743 | 28.08083358    |
| Retrograde endocannabinoid signaling                   | 10/150  | 0.00167349865616307  | 0.0241461948960672   | 3.0651341   | 19.59490832    |
| Neuroactive ligand-receptor interaction                | 17/348  | 0.00171069778931894  | 0.0235609740983472   | 2.246003435 | 14.30895981    |
| Serotonergic synapse                                   | 9/132   | 0.00241588944480672  | 0.0318267174685407   | 3.134796238 | 18.88930332    |
| Fc gamma R-mediated phagocytosis                       | 7/87    | 0.00287625632706458  | 0.0363127361291903   | 3.699299775 | 21.64558595    |
| Regulation of actin cytoskeleton                       | 12/217  | 0.00294032709499641  | 0.0356367643913564   | 2.542507548 | 14.82087258    |
| Dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM)                           | 7/90    | 0.00347972133870684  | 0.0405521371395451   | 3.575989783 | 20.24297392    |
| Apoptosis  | 9/141   | 0.00375836444668354  | 0.0421772010127819   | 2.934702861 | 16.38670992    |
| Cocaine addiction                                      | 5/48    | 0.00377562901206963  | 0.040857699666325    | 4.789272031 | 26.7202504     |
| Morphine addiction                                     | 7/92    | 0.00393256649864465  | 0.0410885396237699   | 3.498250875 | 19.37493308    |
| Arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy (ARVC) | 6/72    | 0.00476843186679707  | 0.0481611618546504   | 3.831417625 | 20.48175394    |
| Proteoglycans in cancer                                | 11/203  | 0.00502723467090038  | 0.0491371646865424   | 2.491365155 | 13.18650979    |
| Ras signaling pathway                                  | 12/233  | 0.00518599384881057  | 0.0491048792559251   | 2.367914755 | 12.45947913    |
| response to calcium ion (GO:0051592)                   | 11/80   | 1.2352727119088e-06  | 0.00630359664887059  | 6.32183908  | 86.00368202    |
| axon guidance (GO:0007411)                             | 15/159  | 2.11788224048725e-06 | 0.00540377653660322  | 4.337453915 | 56.66924273    |
| nervous system development (GO:0007399)                | 25/456  | 2.46003232910435e-05 | 0.0418451499180649   | 2.52066949  | 26.75123758    |
| semaphorin-plexin signaling pathway (GO:0071526)       | 6/30    | 3.8991177233796e-05  | 0.0497429943560153   | 9.195402299 | 93.35333482    |
| regulation of cAMP biosynthetic process (GO:0030817)   | 5/19    | 4.29910702140572e-05 | 0.0438766862604667   | 12.09921355 | 121.651762     |
| integral component of plasma membrane (GO:0005887)     | 61/1464 | 7.0402625056926e-07  | 0.00031399570775389  | 1.915708812 | 27.13879347    |
| dendrite (GO:0030425)                                  | 16/216  | 2.18212117029006e-05 | 0.00486613020974683  | 3.405704555 | 36.55216023    |
| Hypothetical Network for Drug Addiction WP1246         | 6/31    | 4.74677094198248e-05 | 0.00835431685788917  | 8.898776418 | 88.59142051    |

Table 2

|    | Term   | Overlap | P.value      | Adjusted.P.v. | Old.P.value | Old.Adjusted | Odds.Ratio | Combined.Sc | Genes       | database                   |
|----|--|---------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| 1  | Ribosome   | 16/170  | 2.2535714016 | 0.0006828321  | 0           | 0            | 4.06555711 | 52.8644159  | RPS7;RPS5;F | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 2  | Alzheimer disease  | 14/175  | 5.9653102426 | 0.0090374450  | 0           | 0            | 3.45572354 | 33.6136999  | NDUFA13;ND  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 3  | Parkinson disease  | 12/144  | 0.0001349676 | 0.0136317326  | 0           | 0            | 3.59971202 | 32.0751456  | NDUFA13;ND  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 4  | Valine, leucine and isoleucine degradation                             | 7/56    | 0.0002964533 | 0.0224563378  | 0           | 0            | 5.39956803 | 43.8640434  | BCKDHA;ALC  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 5  | Cardiac muscle contraction   | 8/78    | 0.0004410118 | 0.0267253189  | 0           | 0            | 4.4304148  | 34.2313287  | UQCQRQ;COX  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 6  | Hepatocellular carcinoma   | 12/171  | 0.0006547942 | 0.0330671074  | 0           | 0            | 3.03133644 | 22.2233021  | TCF7L2;SMAI | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 7  | cGMP-PKG signaling pathway   | 12/172  | 0.0006895098 | 0.0298459255  | 0           | 0            | 3.01371239 | 21.9384086  | ATF2;PPP1R1 | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 8  | Colorectal cancer  | 8/88    | 0.0009893071 | 0.0374700074  | 0           | 0            | 3.92695857 | 27.1686854  | TCF7L2;SMAI | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 9  | Fatty acid degradation   | 6/50    | 0.0009995403 | 0.0336511912  | 0           | 0            | 5.18358531 | 35.8093221  | ACADL;ECI1; | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 10 | Thermogenesis  | 14/231  | 0.0010310146 | 0.0312397432  | 0           | 0            | 2.61797238 | 18.0043508  | ATF2;NDUFA  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 11 | Oxidative phosphorylation  | 10/134  | 0.0011365665 | 0.0313072522  | 0           | 0            | 3.22362271 | 21.8553336  | NDUFA13;ND  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 12 | Dopaminergic synapse   | 10/135  | 0.0012027348 | 0.0303690537  | 0           | 0            | 3.19974402 | 21.5123824  | ATF2;GRIA2; | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 13 | Vascular smooth muscle contraction                                     | 10/140  | 0.0015824106 | 0.0368823395  | 0           | 0            | 3.08546745 | 19.8975807  | PPP1R12A;AI | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 14 | Endocrine and other factor-regulated calcium reabsorption              | 6/55    | 0.0016548484 | 0.0358156477  | 0           | 0            | 4.71235028 | 30.1781074  | GNAQ;BDKRI  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 15 | Pathways in cancer   | 24/535  | 0.0016621713 | 0.0335758610  | 0           | 0            | 1.9377889  | 12.401133   | RET;TCF7L2; | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 16 | Huntington disease   | 12/192  | 0.0017815419 | 0.0337379513  | 0           | 0            | 2.69978402 | 17.090378   | NDUFA13;ND  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 17 | Endometrial cancer   | 6/58    | 0.0021800554 | 0.0388562817  | 0           | 0            | 4.46860803 | 27.3854397  | TCF7L2;APC; | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 18 | Gastric cancer   | 10/150  | 0.0026327375 | 0.0443177484  | 0           | 0            | 2.87976962 | 17.1050571  | TCF7L2;SMAI | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 19 | Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)                              | 10/151  | 0.0027627966 | 0.0440593356  | 0           | 0            | 2.8606983  | 16.8538379  | NDUFA13;ND  | KEGG_2019_Mouse            |
| 20 | SRP-dependent cotranslational protein targeting to membrane (GO:01690) | 16/90   | 2.3456175755 | 1.1969686487  | 0           | 0            | 7.67938565 | 170.277339  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 21 | protein targeting to ER (GO:0045047)                                   | 16/98   | 8.7398242692 | 2.2299661623  | 0           | 0            | 7.05249702 | 147.100707  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 22 | viral transcription (GO:0019083)                                       | 17/114  | 1.1115537635 | 1.8907529518  | 0           | 0            | 6.44158994 | 132.809526  | RANBP2;RPS  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 23 | cotranslational protein targeting to membrane (GO:0006613)             | 15/94   | 4.0895658105 | 5.2172635828  | 0           | 0            | 6.89306558 | 133.138369  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 24 | viral gene expression (GO:0019080)                                     | 16/111  | 5.7091825356 | 5.8267916956  | 0           | 0            | 6.2265289  | 118.186928  | RANBP2;RPS  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 25 | nuclear-transcribed mRNA catabolic process, nonsense-mediated de       | 15/113  | 5.3284114672 | 4.5318139528  | 0           | 0            | 5.73405455 | 96.0318102  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 26 | cellular protein metabolic process (GO:0044267)                        | 31/485  | 3.8477509014 | 0.0002805010  | 0           | 0            | 2.76101623 | 40.7818853  | RPLP0;RPL1  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 27 | cytoplasmic translation (GO:002181)                                    | 10/55   | 4.6181807744 | 0.0002945822  | 0           | 0            | 7.85391714 | 114.573688  | RPS7;RPLP0  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 28 | nuclear-transcribed mRNA catabolic process (GO:0000956)                | 17/175  | 6.9899324555 | 0.0003963291  | 0           | 0            | 4.19623573 | 59.4758706  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 29 | peptide biosynthetic process (GO:0043043)                              | 17/175  | 6.9899324555 | 0.0003566962  | 0           | 0            | 4.19623573 | 59.4758706  | RPS7;MRPS2  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 30 | rRNA metabolic process (GO:0016072)                                    | 18/201  | 1.0939569396 | 0.0005074965  | 0           | 0            | 3.86834725 | 53.0958095  | UTP15;RPS7; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 31 | rRNA processing (GO:0006364)   | 18/203  | 1.2630718406 | 0.0005371213  | 0           | 0            | 3.83023545 | 52.0221194  | UTP15;RPS7; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 32 | translation (GO:0006412)   | 19/233  | 2.2650960072 | 0.0008891373  | 0           | 0            | 3.52246498 | 45.7846244  | MRPS24;RPS  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 33 | viral process (GO:0016032)   | 18/221  | 4.2461156385 | 0.0015477091  | 0           | 0            | 3.51827057 | 43.5192688  | RANBP2;RPS  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 34 | mitochondrial ATP synthesis coupled electron transport (GO:0042774)    | 11/86   | 4.6602675565 | 0.0015854230  | 0           | 0            | 5.52513938 | 67.8290294  | NDUFA13;ND  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 35 | ribosome biogenesis (GO:0042254)                                       | 18/227  | 6.1737508478 | 0.0019690406  | 0           | 0            | 3.42527664 | 41.086892   | UTP15;RPS7; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 36 | ncRNA processing (GO:0034470)  | 18/228  | 6.5623672682 | 0.0019698682  | 0           | 0            | 3.4102535  | 40.698508   | UTP15;RPS7; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 37 | respiratory electron transport chain (GO:0022904)                      | 11/95   | 1.2341294187 | 0.0034987566  | 0           | 0            | 5.00170513 | 56.5320706  | NDUFA13;ND  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 38 | gene expression (GO:0010467)   | 24/412  | 3.6661542004 | 0.0098465183  | 0           | 0            | 2.51630355 | 25.7009765  | RANBP2;RPS  | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 39 | fatty acid oxidation (GO:0019395)                                      | 7/51    | 0.0001634500 | 0.0417042818  | 0           | 0            | 5.92893745 | 51.6944239  | ACADL;ECI1; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 40 | fatty acid beta-oxidation (GO:0006635)                                 | 7/51    | 0.0001634500 | 0.0397183636  | 0           | 0            | 5.92893745 | 51.6944239  | ACADL;ECI1; | GO_Biological_Process_2018 |
| 41 | ribosome (GO:0005840)  | 14/77   | 2.3166517915 | 1.0332266990  | 0           | 0            | 7.85391714 | 156.160557  | RPS7;DHX9;F | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 42 | cytosolic ribosome (GO:0022626)  | 16/125  | 3.2420827636 | 7.2298445629  | 0           | 0            | 5.52915767 | 95.3473647  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 43 | polysomal ribosome (GO:0042788)  | 8/29    | 2.1739502116 | 3.2319393146  | 0           | 0            | 11.9162881 | 182.814327  | RPL7A;DHX9  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 44 | cytosolic part (GO:0044445)  | 16/160  | 1.0068540106 | 0.0001122642  | 0           | 0            | 4.31965443 | 59.6487254  | RPS7;RPS5;F | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 45 | polysome (GO:0005844)  | 10/64   | 1.9857457595 | 0.0001771285  | 0           | 0            | 6.74946004 | 88.6171437  | RPL7A;DHX9  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 46 | cytosolic small ribosomal subunit (GO:0022627)                         | 8/50    | 1.7758618489 | 0.0013200573  | 0           | 0            | 6.91144708 | 75.6018288  | RPS27;RPS7  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 47 | small ribosomal subunit (GO:0015935)                                   | 8/54    | 3.1741224241 | 0.0020223694  | 0           | 0            | 6.39948804 | 66.2852205  | RPS27;RPS7  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 48 | cytosolic large ribosomal subunit (GO:0022625)                         | 8/70    | 0.0002085490 | 0.0116266070  | 0           | 0            | 4.93674792 | 41.8405998  | RPL7A;RPLP  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 49 | large ribosomal subunit (GO:0015934)                                   | 8/73    | 0.0002795591 | 0.0138537081  | 0           | 0            | 4.73386787 | 38.7339115  | RPL7A;RPLP  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 50 | filicolin-1-rich granule lumen (GO:1904813)                            | 10/124  | 0.0006237135 | 0.0278176225  | 0           | 0            | 3.48359228 | 25.7082819  | EEF1A1;ALAI | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 51 | endocytic vesicle lumen (GO:0071682)                                   | 4/18    | 0.0006702942 | 0.0271773866  | 0           | 0            | 9.59923206 | 70.1492075  | SPARC;HBB;  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 52 | mitochondrial inner membrane (GO:0005743)                              | 18/342  | 0.0011028826 | 0.0409904699  | 0           | 0            | 2.27350233 | 15.4821598  | NDUFA13;ND  | GO_Cellular_Component_2018 |
| 53 | RNA binding (GO:0003723)   | 56/1388 | 3.4592110505 | 0.0398155191  | 0           | 0            | 1.74280006 | 17.9018416  | OTUD4;CELF  | GO_Molecular_Function_2018 |
| 54 | RNA polymerase binding (GO:0070063)                                    | 5/19    | 5.7845249375 | 0.0332899410  | 0           | 0            | 11.3675117 | 110.921214  | ZFP36;DHX9; | GO_Molecular_Function_2018 |
| 55 | Cytoplasmic Ribosomal Proteins WP163                                   | 15/92   | 3.0072409786 | 5.2927441227  | 0           | 0            | 7.04291483 | 138.197785  | RPS7;RPS5;F | WikiPathways_2019_Mouse    |
| 56 | Fatty Acid Beta Oxidation WP1269                                       | 7/34    | 1.0660091045 | 0.0009380880  | 0           | 0            | 8.89340617 | 101.820639  | ACADL;GK;E  | WikiPathways_2019_Mouse    |
| 57 | Mitochondrial LC-Fatty Acid Beta-Oxidation WP401                       | 5/16    | 2.3013966424 | 0.0013501526  | 0           | 0            | 13.4989201 | 144.160493  | ACADL;ECI1; | WikiPathways_2019_Mouse    |
| 58 | mRNA processing WP310  | 22/457  | 0.0010577431 | 0.0465406987  | 0           | 0            | 2.07948353 | 14.2478263  | RNASEH2A;F  | WikiPathways_2019_Mouse    |
| 59 | Fatty acid oxidation WP2318  | 3/10    | 0.0013102260 | 0.0461199575  | 0           | 0            | 12.9589633 | 86.0158391  | ACADM;HAD1  | WikiPathways_2019_Mouse    |