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Single dopaminergic neuron DAN-c1 in *Drosophila* larval brain mediates aversive olfactory

learning through D2-like receptors

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Summary

The dopaminergic system plays critical roles in *Drosophila* olfactory associative learning.

In this study, we identified DAN-c1, a single dopaminergic neuron (DAN) in each brain hemisphere,

that is both necessary and sufficient for *Drosophila* larval aversive associative learning. Compared

to well-known roles of excitatory D1-like receptors in learning, the role of D2-like receptors (D2Rs)

has not been fully investigated. We observed that D2Rs were expressed in DANs and the

mushroom body (MB) in third instar larval brains. Knockdown of D2Rs in DAN-c1 by microRNA

impaired aversive learning. Optogenetic activation of DAN-c1 during training led to an aversive

learning deficit as well, indicating that D2R achieves its functions via autoreceptor inhibition.

Interestingly, knockdown of D2R in MB impaired both appetitive and aversive learning. These

results reveal that D2Rs in different brain structures play important but distinct roles in

Drosophila larval olfactory learning, providing new insights into molecular mechanisms

underlying associative learning.

Key Words:

Drosophila larval aversive learning, D2R, DAN-c1, mushroom body, thermogenetics, optogenetics.

Introduction

Learning defines a behavioral change that results from acquiring information about the world, and memory refers to the process by which the information is encoded, stored, and later retrieved. Learning and memory forms the basis for higher brain functions, including cognition and decision making, which shapes our individuality[1]. On the cellular and physiological level, learning and memory is achieved by neuroplastic changes in circuits, including neuronal excitability and synaptic plasticity. Usually distinct types of neurotransmitters, such as dopamine, modulate these changes.

Dopamine (DA) plays an important role in many mammalian brain functions, including motor functions, motivation, reinforcement, addiction, and learning and memory[2-4]. Dopaminergic neurons (DAN) are mainly located in the mesencephalon: DANs in the substantia nigra (SN) are responsible for motor functions, while those in the ventral tegmental area (VTA) are important in reward, addiction, learning and memory[3,5]. Dopamine achieves its functions via two families of G protein-coupled receptors (GPCR): excitatory D1-like and inhibitory D2-like receptors[4]. All D1-like receptors are located post-synaptically; in contrast, D2-like receptors both function post-synaptically and play an important presynaptic role, regulating dopamine release through negative feedback[4]. All these receptors are important in mammalian associative learning[6,7]. D1-like receptors elevate intracellular cAMP by activating adenylyl cyclase (AC) via $G\alpha_s$, while D2-like receptors repress cAMP by inhibiting AC via $G\alpha_{i/o}$. cAMP activates protein kinase A (PKA), leading to the phosphorylation of DARPP-32 (dopamine and cyclic AMP-regulated phosphoprotein, 32kDa), ion channels, and CREB (cAMP response element-binding protein). In addition, dopamine receptors also activate the PLC-PKC, MAPK, and CaMKII pathways[2-4,8-10].

Although mammalian studies reveal mechanisms more relevant to human beings, the

complexity of the nervous system impedes our understanding about the basic or more universal

principles of learning and memory applicable more generally to all nervous systems[11]. With a

simple central nervous system (CNS) and powerful genetic tools, the fruit fly *Drosophila*

melanogaster has become a popular model organism in learning and memory research[12,13]. With

conserved genes in dopamine metabolism and signaling[14], as well as fundamental similarities in

the olfactory circuitry compared to mammals[15,16], *Drosophila* can perform olfactory associative

learning in both larvae[17-19] and adults[20-24]. Olfactory associative learning is a type of classical

conditioning in which flies are trained under positive or negative reinforcement paired with an

odorant. Different from the naïve reaction to the odorant, flies approach the odorant after being

trained with rewards (e.g., sucrose; appetitive)[21], but avoid the odorant when trained with

punishments (e.g., electric shock, bitter taste chemicals; aversive)[20]. Several genes related to the

cAMP-PKA signaling pathway, including *dunce* (*dnc*)[25] and *rutabaga* (*rut*)[21], are expressed in the

mushroom body (the center for *Drosophila* learning and memory)[26,27]. Mutations of these genes

lead to learning deficiencies, indicating their roles in olfactory learning[21,25].

Compared to adults, larvae provide advantages for studying olfactory learning. First, larvae

share similar circuitry architecture with adult flies, but the learning circuits are much simpler with

less complex structures[28]. An adult brain has around 2600 olfactory receptor neurons[29] (ORN),

300 projection neurons (PN)[30,31], 5000 Kenyon cells[15], and about 282 DANs[32]. Conversely, a third-

instar larval brain has only 42 ORNs, 42 PNs[30], 1000 MBNs[33], and 42 DANs[34]. Second, larvae have

simpler behaviors compared to adults. Larvae slowly crawl in a two-dimensional way, while adults

walk, jump, and fly three-dimensionally. Finally, optogenetics are convenient to apply in larvae

as their cuticles are translucent[35]. In many cases, these advantages make *Drosophila* larvae a

superior model for the investigation of the mechanisms underlying olfactory learning.

Like in mammalian brains, dopamine achieves its functions via four dopamine receptors in

flies, two D1-like receptors dDA1[36] (or DopR1) and DAMB[37] (or DopR2), one D2-like receptor

D2R[38] (or Dop2R), and one non-canonical receptor DopEcR[14,39]. dDA1 is mainly found in the

mushroom body[40,41] and is necessary for appetitive and aversive olfactory learning in larvae and

adults[41,42]. D2R in the mushroom body is necessary for anesthesia-resistant memory[43]. In

addition, D2R in GABAergic APL (anterior paired lateral) neurons is known to secure aversive

conditioning in adult flies[44]. Although D2R expression has been reported in the ventral nerve

cord[45], neither its expression in larval brains, nor its functions in larval olfactory learning have

been investigated.

By using a GFP-tagged D2R strain, we detected the expression pattern of D2R in the third-

instar larval brain, specifically in dopaminergic and mushroom body neurons. Knockdown of D2Rs

in DAN-c1 impaired aversive learning, while knockdown of D2R in mushroom body neurons led

to deficits in both aversive and appetitive learning. These results revealed that D2Rs in distinct

brain structures mediate different learning tasks. The newly discovered roles of D2R in the larval

brain provides new insights into the mechanisms underlying larval associative learning.

Results:

Distinct dopaminergic neurons innervate different compartments of the mushroom body.

The connectome of larval learning has been investigated in both first- and third-instar

larvae[28,46]. The mushroom body works as the learning center in *Drosophila*, which is composed

by αβ, α'β', and γ neurons in adult brains[47]. In larvae, axons from γ neurons bifurcate and form

the vertical and medial lobes, as αβ and α'β' neurons are not mature[33,48,49]. These lobes are

divided into 11 compartments based on the coverage of neurites from both mushroom body

extrinsic neurons (MBEN) and mushroom body output neurons (MBON)[28]. Around 21

dopaminergic neurons are found in each brain hemisphere, and categorized into 4 clusters: DM1

(dorsomedial), pPAM (primary protocerebral anterior medial, or DM2)[50], DL1 (dorsolateral), and

DL2[34]. DL1 neurons project to the vertical lobe[41], while pPAM neurons innervate the medial

lobe[50] (refer to Figure 1A-C).

In this study, we wanted to functionally identify individual DANs that mediate larval aversive

learning. The first step was to search for DAN-specific driver strains that mark single

dopaminergic neurons, which subsequently can be used to target genetic manipulations of

corresponding neurons. A total of 56 driver strains identifying dopaminergic neurons were

screened in this study (Table 1). These strains were chosen based on previous studies, either

identifying a single dopaminergic neuron in larvae, or identifying only several in adult brains and

indicating the potential of identifying single DAN in larvae. TH-GAL4, a traditional dopaminergic

neuronal driver[51], identifies all dopaminergic neurons except those in pPAM (Figure 1D, Figure

S1A). Split-GFP reconstitution across synaptic partners (GRASP) technique was used to

investigate the "direct" synaptic connections from DANs to the mushroom body (MB), in which

portions of GFP were specifically expressed in corresponding neurons (Figure S2D). GRASP results

showed neurons under TH-GAL4 formed synapses in the vertical lobe and lower peduncle (white

dash lines in Figure 1D'), consistent with previous electron microscopy data[46]. We found three

DAN driver strains that identify single dopaminergic neurons in the third-instar larval brain

hemisphere. DAN driver R76F02-AD;R55C10-DBD identifies a dopaminergic neuron innervating

the lower peduncle (LP), which would be DAN-c1 based on previous published nomenclature[28]

(Figure 1F). MB296B driver identifies the dopaminergic neuron (DAN-d1) projecting to the lateral

appendix (LA) (Figure 1G), as well as many non-dopaminergic neurons. SS1716 driver identifies

one dopaminergic neuron forming synapses in the lower vertical lobe (LVL), indicating it is DAN-

g1 (Figure 1H).

In pPAM, R58E02 driver identifies DAN-h1, i1, and j1, innervating the shaft (SHA),

intermediate toe (IT) and upper toe (UT) (Figure 1I), and R30G08 driver identifies DAN-h1 and i1

(Figure 1J). As described in a previous report[28], SS864 driver identifies DAN-i1, innervating the

upper toe (Figure 1L), and SS1757 driver identifies DAN-k1 which innervates the lower toe (LT)

(Figure 1M). In contrast, SS1696 driver identifies not only DAN-h1, but also i1 and one DL1 neuron

not innervating the mushroom body (Figure 1K).

In summary, our results show that five DL1 and four pPAM DANs innervate nine distinct

mushroom body compartments in a one-to-one pattern (Figure 1B and C). DL1 neurons innervate

the vertical lobe and peduncle, while pPAM neurons project to the medial lobe. The single

neuronal driver strains screened can be used to investigate the roles of individually identified

DANs in larval olfactory learning.

Dopamine release from DAN-c1 is both necessary and sufficient for larval aversive learning.

Dopamine plays an important role during olfactory associative learning in both adults and

larvae[52,53]. In adults, dopaminergic neurons in PPL1 regulate aversive learning[54-57], while those in

PAM mediate reward signals in appetitive learning[58-60]. In larvae, DL1 neurons innervating the

vertical lobe and the peduncle are required for aversive learning[18,41], while those in pPAM

projecting to the medial lobe are involved in appetitive learning[50].

In Figure 1 and Table 1, three driver strains identifying single dopaminergic neurons in DL1

were discovered, which could be candidates to investigate their roles in larval aversive learning.

The R76F02-AD;R55C10-DBD strain identifies MB-MP1 in the adult brain[61], which is a

dopaminergic neuron involved in adult aversive learning[62]. This driver strain identifies one

neuron per hemisphere in the third-instar larval brain (Figure 2A-C, Figure S1C). Using a UAS-

DenMark;UAS-sytGFP strain, its dendrites were labeled with RFP and axonal terminals were

marked by GFP. Its dendrites were localized in the dorsomedial protocerebrum (dml), and its

axonal terminals located in the lower peduncle of the mushroom body (Figure 2A and D), with

GRASP results supporting the existence of synapses in this compartment (Figure 2E). All these

characteristics are consistent with the previously published nomenclature[28], indicating that this

neuron is DAN-c1 (Figure 2F), thus, this strain will now be referred to simply as DAN-c1.

To reveal the role of DAN-c1 in larval olfactory learning, a single odor learning paradigm and

thermogenetic tools were applied[17,18,63]. Compared to those trained with distilled water (DW),

control larvae exhibited repulsion to the odorant pentyl acetate (PA) after being trained with

quinine (QUI) paired with PA, reflecting aversive learning. In contrast, larvae were attracted to

PA after being trained with sucrose (SUC) paired with PA, reflecting appetitive learning. The

extent of repulsion or attraction was represented with a response index (R.I.) that is compared

to the DW group (Figure 2G).

To examine the role of DAN-c1 in aversive learning, we used a *Shibire^{ts1}* strain, which

encodes a thermosensitive mutant of dynamin blocking neurotransmitter release when the

ambient temperature is higher than 30°C by repressing endocytosis and vesicle recycling

functions[17]. When trained at 34°C, the complete inactivation of dopamine release from DAN-c1

with *Shibire^{ts1}* impaired aversive learning (Figure 2H), while *Shibire^{ts1}* did not affect learning when

trained at room temperature (22°C). These data indicated that dopamine release from DAN-c1 is

necessary for larval aversive learning to occur.

In the next experiments, a fly carrying temperature-sensitive cation channel, dTRPA1, was

used to excite the DAN-c1 neuron because it can be activated at temperatures higher than 30°C[58].

Activation of DAN-c1 with dTRPA1 at 34°C during training induced repulsion to PA in the distilled

water group (Figure 2K). These data suggested that DAN-c1 excitation and presumably increased

dopamine release is sufficient for larval aversive learning in the absence of gustatory pairing.

Combining the blockade results with *Shibire^{ts1}*, these data revealed that dopamine released

from DAN-c1 activation is both necessary and sufficient in larval aversive learning. However,

when paired with a gustatory stimulus (QUI or SUC), activation of DAN-c1 during training impairs

both aversive and appetitive learning (Figure 2K). We suggest that these data indicate a critical

role for the amount of DAN-c1 dopamine release in larval associative learning, as dTRPA1

stimulation may result in excessive dopamine release.

The expression pattern of D2R in the third-instar larval brain.

Although dopamine D1-like receptors have been proven important for learning[42], the role of

D2-like receptors has not been fully investigated. In addition, the expression pattern of D2R in fly

brains was not reported. A fly strain expressing GFP-tagged D2R (BDSC#60276) was used to reveal

the expression pattern of D2R in the third-instar larval brain (Figure 3A). D2Rs were found in

dopaminergic neurons and the mushroom body. In dopaminergic neurons (Figure 3B-G), D2Rs

were found in DM1, pPAM, DL2b, and some DL1 neurons. In the mushroom body, D2Rs were

expressed in the soma and lobes, but not in the calyx (Figure 3H, I, and Video 1). Even though

D2Rs were widely found in vertical lobes, medial lobes, and peduncles, they were not expressed

in every mushroom body neuron. A transection of the peduncle region showed the absence of

D2Rs in the core area (Figure S3I), which is composed of densely packed newly created fibers and

lacks Fasciclin II (FAS II)[49].

To inspect whether the pattern of GFP signals indeed reflected the expression of D2R, three

D2R enhancer driver strains (R72C04, R72C08, and R72D03-GAL4) were crossed with the GFP-

tagged D2R strain. R72C08-GAL4 covered three DM1 dopaminergic neurons (Figure S3C), and

R72C04-GAL4 labeled one DM1 and two DL2b dopaminergic neurons (Figure S3D and E). R72D03-

GAL4 identified parts of mushroom body neurons, whose axons spread on the surface of the

mushroom body lobes (Figure S3F); R72C08-GAL4 also identified a subset of neurons from four

MB neuroblasts, with soma in four clusters and a converged bundle of axons (Figure S3G and H).

These results revealed the expression of D2R in the mushroom body and dopaminergic neurons

in the third-instar larval brain.

D2R in DAN-c1 influences larval aversive learning.

Our previous work reported that D2R knockdown (UAS-RNAi) in dopaminergic neurons

driven by TH-GAL4 impaired larval aversive learning[63]. Using a microRNA strain (UAS-D2R-miR)[61],

a similar deficit was observed (Figure S5C). To further understand the roles of D2R in aversive

learning, its expression in distinct DANs, as well as corresponding learning assays were both

investigated. Crossing the GFP-tagged D2R strain with a DAN-c1-mCherry strain demonstrated

the expression of D2R in DAN-c1 (Figure 4A).

To reduce the expression of D2R in dopaminergic neurons, a microRNA strain UAS-D2R-miR

was used when crossing with distinct driver strains. The efficiency of D2R knockdown was

confirmed by crossing the GFP-tagged D2R strain with TH-GAL4;UAS-D2R-miR. In these larval

brains, GFP signals in DM1 were not detected, while those in pPAM were still intact (Figure 4B

and C). Quantification showed a significant decrease of GFP signals in the knockdown group

compared to the control (Figure 4D), indicating reduced transcripts of D2R linked GFP by D2R-

microRNA (Figure S4F).

To investigate the roles of D2R in distinct dopaminergic neurons during larval associative

learning, UAS-D2R-miR strain was crossed with distinct single dopaminergic neuronal drivers.

Among them, the knockdown of D2R in DAN-c1 impaired aversive learning with the odorant

pentyl acetate, while appetitive learning was unaffected (Figure 4E). In contrast, although D2R

was also found in DAN-d1 and DAN-g1, neither D2R knockdown in DAN-d1 nor in DAN-g1 affected

larval olfactory learning (Figure S4C-E). As the naïve sensory and motor functions were not

affected, this deficiency was caused by impairment in learning abilities (Figure 4F-I). Similar

learning deficits were observed in the same strain trained with another odorant, propionic acid

(Figure S5A), as well as in larvae with D2R knockdown using UAS-RNAi (Figure S5B). These results

demonstrated that D2Rs are expressed in DAN-c1, and they are necessary for larval aversive

learning. Presumably the knockdown of presynaptic inhibitory D2R auto-receptors on DAN-c1

will result in increased and excessive dopamine release, which leads to aversive learning

deficiency. These results are consistent with the activation studies with dTRPA1 above, in which

increased dopamine release during training results in impaired aversive learning (Figure 2K).

Over-excitation of DAN-c1 during learning impairs larval aversive learning.

To exclude possible chronic effects of D2R knockdown during development, optogenetics

was applied at distinct stages of the learning protocol. Channelrhodopsin2 (ChR2) is a blue light

activated cation channel from algae, which can be used to activate target neurons[64,65]. Over-

excitation of DANs under a TH-GAL4 driver with ChR2 during training impaired aversive learning

but left appetitive learning intact (Figure S7), which is consistent with D2R knockdown results. To

investigate the mechanisms with a better temporospatial resolution, ChR2 was expressed in

DAN-c1, and blue light was applied at distinct stages of the learning protocol (Figure 5A).

Optogenetic activation of DAN-c1 during training impaired aversive learning, not appetitive

learning (Figure 5B-D). This result is consistent with the effect of D2R knockdown in DAN-c1,

indicating that increased, excessive dopamine release during training leads to impaired aversive

learning.

D2R in mushroom body mediates larval learning through inhibition.

We have shown that D2R in DAN-c1 plays a critical role in larval aversive learning. Since D2Rs

are also expressed in soma and axons in most mushroom body neurons (Figure 3H and I), we

examined the role of D2R in MB neurons, the center for learning in *Drosophila*. Knockdown of

these D2Rs by D2R-miR impaired both appetitive and aversive learning (Figure 6A). Similarly,

optogenetic activation of mushroom body neurons during training led to deficiencies in both

appetitive and aversive learning. These deficiencies were not observed in larvae with activation

during the resting stage. As D2Rs are inhibitory receptors, and optogenetic activation leads to

greater neuronal excitation like what may occur with knockdown of D2Rs, these data show that

the inhibitory effect of D2Rs in mushroom body neurons is necessary for larval olfactory

associative learning to occur.

Discussion:

The dopaminergic system plays an important role in *Drosophila* olfactory associative

learning, but the roles of D2R in this process have not been fully explored. In this study, we

systematically investigated the expression pattern of D2R in the third-instar larval brain as well

as its role in larval aversive and appetitive learning. One driver strain singly identifying the DAN-

c1 neuron was discovered and learning assays with thermogenetic tools determined that the

blockade of dopamine release from DAN-c1 impeded aversive learning, while its activation during

training led to repulsion toward the odor in the absence of unconditioned stimulus (i.e., QUI).

These results revealed that DAN-c1 activation (i.e., presumably leading to the release of synaptic

dopamine) is both necessary and sufficient for larval aversive learning to occur. Subsequently,

the expression pattern of D2R was explored by using a GFP-tagged D2R strain, including distinct

dopaminergic and mushroom body neurons. D2Rs were expressed in DAN-c1, and the

knockdown of these receptors resulted in aversive learning deficiency. These data suggest that

presynaptic D2Rs in a single dopaminergic neuron, DAN-c1, regulate dopamine release during

excitation whereas knockdown of these same receptors leads to excessive dopamine release,

causing deficits in aversive learning to occur. Furthermore, the activation of DAN-c1 with

optogenetic tools during training, resulting in excessive dopamine release, impaired aversive

learning, as well. Finally, it was demonstrated that either the knockdown of postsynaptic D2R or

activation of mushroom body neurons led to learning deficits. These data demonstrate that D2Rs

in distinct brain locations are critically involved in associative learning.

Insights into the neuronal circuits underlying larval olfactory associative learning.

Mushroom body and dopaminergic neurons play important roles in *Drosophila* associative

learning[66-69]. In larvae, olfactory information (odors, Conditioned Stimulus, CS) is received by

olfactory sensory neurons (OSN), then transmitted to the mushroom body via projection neurons

(PN)[70]. The mushroom body (MB) is the learning center of *Drosophila* and composed of Kenyon

cells (KC, or mushroom body neurons, MBN)[71-73]. Their dendrites form the calyx, receiving

olfactory information from projection neurons. The axons converge into peduncles, then branch

into the vertical and medial lobes. Distinct gustatory cues (taste, Unconditioned Stimuli, US) are

sensed by gustatory sensory neurons (GSN) and transferred to dopaminergic neurons in different

clusters (Figure 7A). DAN-c1 in the DL1 cluster mediates aversive cues, projects to the lower

peduncle (LP) in the mushroom body. The plasticity of synapses from MBNs to MB output

neurons (MBON) is negatively modulated by dopamine[67,74,75]. The MBN-MBON synapses in the

vertical lobe and peduncle are responsible for attraction, while those in the medial lobe are for

repulsion[67,75].

When only the odorant appears, the subset of Kenyon cells representing this odor are

depolarized, inducing calcium influx[73]. As a balance exists between compartments across the

mushroom body lobes, the response to the odor depends on the naïve olfactory circuits from

projection neurons to the lateral horn (LH). In aversive learning, in addition to olfaction induced

calcium influx, gustatory stimuli also lead to dopamine release from DAN-c1 and subsequently,

activation of $G\alpha_s$ in LP[54]. The co-existence of calcium and $G\alpha_s$ activates a Ca^{2+}-dependent

adenylate cyclase (AC), rutabaga (rut)[76-79]. Rutabaga converges information from both olfaction

and gustation, working as the coincidence detector of associative learning. Its downstream

signaling inhibits attractive MBN-MBON synapses in the LP, breaking the balance between

distinct compartments. As a result, after learning the larvae will exhibit repulsion when exposed

to the odor again. In contrast, dopaminergic neurons in the pPAM convey appetitive cues, which

project to compartments in the medial lobe. The co-existence of olfactory and appetitive

gustatory stimuli leads to inhibition of these repulsive MBN-MBON synapses, inducing attraction.

The conserved role of DAN-c1 in aversive learning throughout *Drosophila* development.

Adult *Drosophila* share similar neuronal circuits of learning with larvae[54,66-69]. In adult brains,

dopaminergic neurons are classified into 13 clusters, named as PAM (protocerebral anterior

medial), PAL (protocerebral anterior lateral), PPM (protocerebral posterior medial), PPL

(protocerebral lateral), and PPD (protocerebral posterior dorsal) clusters[32]. DANs in the PAM

cluster innervate the medial lobe, while those in PPL1 project to the vertical lobe[69].

R76F02-AD;R55C10-DBD identifies two dopaminergic neurons in adult brains, MB-MP1 in

PPL1 and ALT-PLPC in PPL2ab [61]. MB-MP1 is also named PPL1-γ1pedc, innervating both γ1 and

the peduncle of the β lobe[69]. Activation of this neuron induced aversive learning[62], and activation

of its corresponding MBON-γ1pedc>α/β led to approach[80]. During metamorphosis, dopaminergic

neurons in DL1 develop into the PPL1 cluster, DL2a neurons develop into PPL2ab, and those in

pPAM will develop into the PAM cluster[81]. This driver strain only identifies DAN-c1 from DL1 in

larvae, which innervates the lower peduncle of the mushroom body. Interestingly, previous

reports revealed that memory can be transferred from larvae to adults[82], indicating the

maintenance of neuronal circuitry architecture during metamorphosis. This evidence supports

that DAN-c1 is the corresponding neuron of PPL1-γ1pedc in larvae, which performs similar

functions in aversive learning.

Pre- and post-synaptic D2Rs regulate cAMP in the mushroom body during aversive learning.

The molecular mechanisms underlying *Drosophila* learning have not been fully determined.

In a traditional view, gustatory cues elevate dopamine release, which binds to D1 receptors and

then activates Gα_s. The co-existence of Gα_s and calcium elicited by olfactory cues activates

rutabaga in axons of MBNs. Rutabaga transforms ATP into cAMP, activating PKA signaling

pathway. Mutant flies with either insufficient (*rutabaga*) or excessive cAMP (*dunce*) showed

aversive learning deficiency, indicating that the level of cAMP should be kept in an optimal range

to achieve aversive learning[21,25] (Figure 7B).

Our results have shown that D2Rs in dopaminergic neurons and the mushroom body are

important for larval aversive learning, suggesting a "*dual brake*" role in regulating cAMP levels in

the MBNs through both pre- and postsynaptic components. On the presynaptic side, D2R in DAN-

c1 decreases the release of dopamine under gustatory stimuli, reducing the probability of

postsynaptic D1R activation in MBNs. On the postsynaptic side, D2R in MBNs inhibits the

coincidence detector rutabaga (AC) both via activation of $G\alpha_{i/o}$ and inhibition of voltage-gated

calcium channels[2], indicating postsynaptic D2R functioning as a *"brake of the coincidence*

detector". Combining these, *"dual brake"* D2R ultimately regulates the mushroom body cAMP

level within a physiologically optimal range during aversive learning. In addition, D2R fine tunes

the functional concentration spectrum of dopamine with higher resolutions, as its dopamine

affinity is 10- to 100-fold greater than D1 receptors. Overall, D2Rs work in a "dual brake" system

both expanding the representation of a dynamic range of gustatory signal intensity with high

signal to noise ratio and preventing postsynaptic overexcitation, which increases the reliability of

DAN-c1 and MBN circuits for the larval aversive learning (Figure 7C & D).

Recent studies showed that the approach/repulsion in learning is achieved via inhibition of

the repulsive/attractive representing compartments[67,74,75], which indicates dopamine inhibits

acetylcholine release from MBN to MBON[83]. However, the PKA signaling pathway usually

elevates neuronal excitability and increases neurotransmitter release[2,3], which is contradictory

to the recent findings. In addition to the *"dual brake"* role of D2R, our results suggest a third role

of D2R in aversive learning. D1 and D2 receptors can form heteromeric receptors, whose

downstream $G\alpha_q$ activates PKC and CaMKII signaling pathways. The activation of these signaling

pathways may reduce acetylcholine release[84] (Figure 7C & D).

Explaining the results of thermogenetic and optogenetic experiments.

Activation of DAN-c1 with dTRPA1 induced aversive learning, while the repulsion

disappeared when DAN-c1 was activated in the quinine group (Figure 2K). Our explanation is that

quinine stimulation and temperature activation led to over-excitation of DAN-c1, which impaired

aversive learning. This is consistent with the learning deficiency in larvae with D2R knockdown in

DAN-c1 (Figure 4E). Results from optogenetic activation of DAN-c1 during aversive learning also

support this (Figure 5B). However, in contrast to results with thermo-activation, larvae with

optogenetic activation of DAN-c1 showed neither repulsion after being trained with distilled

water (Figure 5C), nor did they show reduced attraction in the sucrose group (Figure 5D). One

possible explanation is that the thermo-activation is relatively mild compared to the optogenetic

activation. Based on this, thermo-activation of DAN-c1 is still in the physiological range of cAMP

under the upper cutoff (Figure 7B), resulting in repulsion in the distilled water (DW) group,

neutralized attraction in SUC group, and impaired repulsion in QUI group. In contrast,

optogenetic activation of DAN-c1 overwhelmed the physiological conditions, leading to failure of

repulsion in DW group (Figure 5C). This repulsive failure did not affect appetitive learning (Figure

5D), and a stronger over-excitation in QUI group induced similar failure (Figure 5B).

Distinct dopaminergic neurons may have different roles in larval aversive learning.

Previous work reported that aversive olfactory learning was induced through the optogenetic

activation of DAN- d1, f1, or g1, but not DAN-c1[85]. This discrepancy can be explained as the

optogenetic overexcitation of DAN-c1, similar to our optogenetic or D2R knockdown results. Our

learning assay results from larvae with D2R knockdown in DAN-d1 or g1 also supported this:

aversive learning was not affected by D2R knockdown (Figure S4E). These data indicate D2Rs in

DAN-d1 or g1 are not involved in larval aversive learning. Additionally, the DAN-c1 strain used in

the previous work (SS02160-split-GAL4) not only labels DAN-c1, but also marks other non-

dopaminergic neurons, which may affect the results. Besides, live calcium imaging showed that

DAN-d1, f1, and g1 responded to the activation of mechanosensory and nociceptive neurons[85],

indicating a functional differentiation from gustatory activated DAN-c1[62,86].

In future studies, the molecular signaling downstream of D2R needs to be explored, as well

as the comprehensive neuronal circuit architectures of larval learning. The neuronal circuits

underlying learning and memory are complex networks, sharing similarities with the regulatory

networks of gene expression. Studies of the mechanisms of learning and memory help us

understand the essential principles of the non-linear dynamic characteristics in these complex

systems. On one hand, the progress in larval learning provides useful information for helping our

understanding about more complex systems, from brains in adult flies to those in mammals. On

the other hand, the architecture of larval learning circuits could improve either hardware design

or algorithm structures in artificial intelligence, which may bring more powerful tools, such as

navigation systems regulating multiple auto-drive vehicles in complex 3-dimentional

environments.

In conclusion, we explored the expression pattern of D2R in the third-instar larval brain and

investigated their roles during larval olfactory learning. D2Rs were found in DAN-c1, and their

knockdown induced deficiency in aversive learning. D2Rs were also expressed in MBNs,

knockdown of which impaired both aversive and appetitive learning. This research revealed the

important roles of D2Rs in *Drosophila* larval olfactory learning and enriched our understanding

regarding the mechanisms underlying the learning process.

Author contributions

Qi. C.: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft, Visualization, **Qian. C.:** Writing – Review & Editing, **Steijvers. E.:** Writing – Review & Editing **Colvin. R.:** Writing – Review & Editing **Lee. D.:** Conceptualization, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision, Funding acquisition

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Declaration of Interest

The authors declare no competing interests.

Figure legends

Figure 1. Identification of driver strains for single dopaminergic neurons in the *Drosophila* larval brain. (A) A schematic diagram shows the dopaminergic neuron (DAN) clusters and the mushroom body (MB) in the third-instar larval brain. **(B)** & **(C)** Schematic diagrams show the innervation patterns from distinct DANs to different compartments in the MB. All 11 MB compartments are shown, note that there is no synapse formed from dopaminergic neurons to the calyx and intermediate peduncle (IP). DANs in DL1 (B) and in pPAM (C). **(D-M)** Drivers covering DANs in the DL1 cluster (D-H). Drivers covering DANs in the pPAM cluster (I-M). The first column shows drivers covering distinct dopaminergic neurons. Neurons under the drivers are labeled by GFP, the mushroom body (MB) is labeled by RFP, and dopaminergic neurons (DANs) are marked by tyrosine hydroxylase (TH) antibody. The second column (D'-M') shows the GRASP signals from DANs under the driver to the corresponding compartments in the MB. The green channel represents the GRASP signals, and RFP marks the morphology of the MB. In the first column, white arrows mark the DANs under the driver strains. Yellow arrows in (D) show the pPAM neurons not labelled by TH-GAL4 driver strain. The yellow arrowhead in (K) showed the DL1 neuron not innervating the MB. Scale bars: 50 μm for the first column, and 20 μm for the second column. ***Abbreviations:*** DL, dorsolateral; DM, dorsomedial; IP, intermediate peduncle; IT intermediate toe; IVL, intermediate vertical lobe; LA, lateral appendix; LP, lower peduncle; LT, lower toe; LVL, lower vertical lobe; pPAM, primary protocerebral anterior medial; SHA, shaft; UT, upper toe; UVL, upper vertical lobe. *(Note) GFP expression patterns in the entire larval CNS by GAL4 driver strains used in this study can be found in Figure S1.*

Figure 2. DAN-c1 is both necessary and sufficient for larval aversive learning. (A-F) R76F02-AD;R55C10-DBD driver is used as it covers one dopaminergic neuron, DAN-c1, in each brain hemisphere. **(A)** Dendrites and axons of DAN-c1 are labeled by DenMark and sytGFP, correspondingly. **(B-E)** The innervation patterns of DAN-c1. DAN-c1 is labeled with GFP, the MB with RFP, and DANs with TH antibody (blue color). Only one DAN soma is identified (C), axons from DAN-c1 innervate the lower peduncle (LP) of the MB (D), and synapses from DAN-c1 to the LP of the MB are shown by GRASP (E). A schematic diagram (F) shows the innervation patterns of DAN-c1. Modified from Eichler *et al.*[46], and Saumweber *et. al.*[28]. **(G)** A schematic paradigm for larval olfactory learning (top) and two different training paradigms for thermogenetics (bottom). **(H-J)** Blocking dopamine release from DAN-c1 during learning using *shibire^{ts1}* strain under 34°C impairs larval aversive learning. **(J-L)** Activation of DAN-c1 with dTRTPA1 under 34°C induces aversive learning. **QUI,** quinine. **DW,** distill water. **SUC,** sucrose. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001. For N numbers, see Table S2. Scale bars: 50 μm (A and B), 20 μm (C, D and E).

Figure 3. D2Rs are expressed in dopaminergic neurons and mushroom body in *Drosophila* larval brains. (A) The expression pattern of D2R in a general view. D2R is shown with tagged GFP (D2R-GFP). Magenta represents neuropils marked by nc82 antibody (A'). **(B-G)** D2Rs (presynaptic)

are found in most DANs: DM1a (**B**) and DM1b (**C**), pPAM (**D**), DL1 (**E**), DL2a (**F**), and DL2b (**G**)
clusters. D2Rs are expressed in parts of DL1 neurons (white arrows in **E**) but not in DL2a neurons
(yellow arrow heads in **F**). **(H-I)** D2Rs (postsynaptic) are found in soma of mushroom body (MB)
neurons (white arrows in **H**), and MB lobes and peduncles (**I**), but not in calyx (yellow arrow heads
in **H**). **(J)** A schematic diagram shows the expression pattern of pre- and postsynaptic D2R in DANs
and MB (yellow) in the *Drosophila* larval brain, respectively. Scale bars: 200 µm **(A)**; 50 µm (**B-G**);
20 µm **(H, I)**. ***Abbreviations:*** DL, dorsolateral; DM, dorsomedial; pPAM, primary protocerebral
anterior medial. Supplementary Video 1. The expression pattern of D2R in dopaminergic neurons
and the mushroom body lobes.
473
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Figure 4. Presynaptic D2R in DAN-c1 is necessary for larval aversive learning. (A) D2R is
expressed in DAN-c1. The expression pattern of D2R is shown with tagged GFP, DAN-c1 is marked
by mCherry, and all DANs are marked with TH antibody (blue). **(B-C)** Knockdown of D2R by D2R-
miR reduces fluorescent intensities of D2R-tagged GFP (D2R-GFP). The TH-GAL4 driver is used to
express mCherry. The intensity of D2R-tagged GFP is reduced in the DM1 cluster (yellow
arrowheads in B), which is still intact in pPAM neurons (white arrows in C). **(D)** D2R-GFP
fluorescent intensity is quantified by standardizing the values in DM1 with those in the pPAM.
Data are shown as mean ± SEM. For the TH-GAL4 group, N=32 from 8 brains; for the TH×D2R-miR
group, N=24 from 6 brains. Unpaired t test, ****p < 0.0001. Scale bar: 20µm. **(E)** Knockdown of
D2R in DAN-c1 by D2R-miR impairs larval aversive learning. **QUI,** quinine. **DW,** distill water. **SUC,**
sucrose. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test,
p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001. For N numbers, see Table S3. **(F-I) D2R knockdown in
DAN-c1 does not affect naïve sensory and motor functions. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. One-
way ANOVA, Tukey multiple comparisons test. For N numbers, see Table S3. *(Note) Figures S5*
and S6 show additional information on naïve sensory and motor functions in larvae related to
D2R-miR experiments.
491
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Figure 5. Over-excitation of DAN-c1 impairs larval aversive learning. (A) A schematic
diagram of optogenetic manipulations of neuronal excitability in DAN-c1 during distinct stages in
learning. **(B-D)** Activation of DAN-c1 during training impairs larval aversive learning (**B**), while
keeps appetitive learning intact (**D**). Unconditioned stimuli used were quinine (B) and sucrose (D).
No learning behaviors are observed in the control distilled water (DW) groups (**C**). Third-instar
larvae with ChR2 expression in DAN-c1 are used. *ATR,* all-trans-retinal. Data are shown as mean
± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001. For
N numbers, see Table S4.
501
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Figure 6. D2R in mushroom body is necessary for both aversive and appetitive learning. (A)
Knockdown D2R in mushroom body neurons (MBNs) impairs larval aversive and appetitive
learning. **(B-D)** Activation of MBNs during training impairs both larval aversive and appetitive
learning. Unconditioned stimuli used were quinine (B) and sucrose (D). No learning behaviors are
observed in the control distilled water (DW) groups (**C**). Third-instar larvae with ChR2 expression

in MBNs (201Y-GAL4) are used. *ATR,* all-trans-retinal. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way
ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001.
For N numbers, see Table S3 and S4.

Figure 7. Roles of D2Rs in dopaminergic and mushroom body neurons during larval
olfactory learning. **(A)** A schematic diagram shows the roles of D2R in dopaminergic neurons
(DAN) and mushroom body neurons (MBN) in larval olfactory associative learning**.** During
learning, olfactory stimuli (conditioned stimulus, CS) are received by olfactory sensory neurons
(OSN) and transmitted to MBNs (green) via projection neurons (PN). Distinct gustatory stimuli
(unconditioned stimulus, US) are received by gustatory sensory neurons (GSN) and transferred
to different dopaminergic neurons. Aversive stimuli are sent to DAN-c1 (red) in the DL1 cluster
which connects the lower peduncle compartment (LP, square in dash line), while appetitive
stimuli are received by pPAM neurons (blue) innervating the medial lobe (ML). D2Rs (yellow
square) are expressed in DAN-c1 and pPAM as auto-receptors, regulating dopamine release. Both
D2R and dDA1 (magenta circle) are expressed in the MBNs. **(B)** A hypothetical curve showing the
relationship between learning ability and cAMP level in the mushroom body. Insufficient cAMP
(*rutabaga mutant*) cannot induce learning, while excessive cAMP (*dunce mutant*) also impairs
learning. Only the appropriate level of cAMP regulated by the opposing actions of D1R (dDA1)
and D2R leads to successful learning in wild type larvae (WT). Knockdown of D2R in DAN-c1
causes excessive dopamine release, elevating cAMP and resulting in impaired learning. D2R
knockdown in MBNs relieves the inhibition effect of D2R, resulting in excessive intracellular cAMP
and learning failure. **(C-D)** Potential molecular mechanisms underlying *Drosophila* olfactory
learning in the square region shown in (A). **(D)** During aversive learning, olfactory stimuli induce
depolarization of MBNs, which activates voltage-gated calcium channels and induces calcium
influx. Gustatory stimuli, such as quinine, activates dopaminergic neurons and elevates dopamine
(DA) release. D1 receptor (dDA1) activates adenylyl cyclase (AC) and elevates cAMP via $G\alpha_s$, while
D2 receptor (D2R) inhibits AC and suppresses cAMP via $G\alpha_{i/o}$. In *Drosophila*, the coincidence
detector *rutabaga* (AC) is activated by the existence of both calcium and $G\alpha_s$, converging the
olfactory and gustatory stimuli. cAMP activates the PKA signaling pathway, elevating the
neuronal excitability. D1 and D2 receptors can also form heteromeric receptors and activate the
PLC-PKC and CaMKII signaling pathways via $G\alpha_q$. These pathways inhibit acetylcholine (ACh)
release from MBNs to MB output neurons (MBON), which leads to avoidance of the learned odor.
Abbreviations: AC, adenylyl cyclase; ACh, acetylcholine; ATP, adenosine triphosphate; CaM,
calmodulin; CaMKII, Ca^{2+}/calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II; cAMP, cyclic adenosine
monophosphate; CS, conditioned stimulus; DA, dopamine; DAN, dopaminergic neurons; DL,
dorsolateral; ER, endoplasmic reticulum; $G\alpha_{i/o}$, $G_{i/o}$ protein α subunit; $G\alpha_q$, G_q protein α subunit;
$G\alpha_s$, G_s protein α subunit; GSN, gustatory sensory neurons; LP, lower peduncle; MBN, mushroom
body neurons; MBON, mushroom body output neurons; ML, medial lobe; nAChR, nicotinic
acetylcholine receptor; OSN, olfactory sensory neurons; PKA, protein kinase A; PKC, protein
kinase C; PLC, phospholipase C; PN, projection neurons; pPAM, primary protocerebral anterior
medial; RyR, ryanodine receptor; US, unconditioned stimulus; VGCC, voltage gated calcium
channel.

Table 1. Driver strains screened for dopaminergic neurons in the third-instar larval brain.
Strains are listed with their published names and names used in this work. The numbers of
dopaminergic and non-dopaminergic neurons in the third-instar larval brain are described. The
identities of dopaminergic neurons from distinct clusters are also listed, especially for those in
DL1 and pPAM. The analogs column lists the labelled neurons in previous publications.
Source/Gift column shows the original papers in which these strains were described, as well as
the laboratories these strains were obtained from. Several, 2-5 neurons; some, 6-10 neurons;
lots, >10 neurons.
559

Materials and Methods:

Fly stocks All fly strains used in this study are listed in Table 1 and Table S1. Flies were

maintained on standard medium, which consists of cornmeal, yeast, dextrose, sucrose and agar

in water. Flies were kept in a 12/12-hour light/dark cycle at 25℃. Canton-S genotype (WT) and

yw^{1118} were used as wild-type. Strains used are listed in Table 1 and Table S1. Strains carrying

more than one transgene were constructed by standard genetic crosses with the w^{1118};

CyO/Sco; TM2/TM6 multiple balancer chromosomes strain. Strain UAS-Syb::spGFP1-10,

LexAop-CD4::GFP11, LexAop-rCD2::RFP /CyO; MB247-LexA::Up16/TM6B was made by

chromosome swapping between UAS-Syb::spGFP1-10, LexAop-CD4::GFP11/CyO (II, second

chromosome) and LexAop-rCD2::RFP (II).

The D2R gene is located on the X chromosome, with 6 different alternative splicing products.

The GFP-tagged D2R strain is inserted with a GFP gene in the second intron, generating D2R

molecules tagged with GFP[87,88]. The D2R-miR strain produces microRNA recognizing the

sequence across the third and fourth exons, which is not affected by the GFP insertion (Figure

S4F).

GRASP Split-GFP reconstitution across synaptic partners (GRASP) was used to investigate

whether neurons formed synapses[89] (Figure S2D). Half of split GFP tethered to the presynaptic

synaptobrevin (UAS-syb::spGFP1-10) was expressed in one type of neuron using UAS/Gal4 binary

system, and the complementary split GFP linked to a membrane protein (LexAop-CD4::spGFP11)

was expressed in another category of neuron with LexA/LexAop. If synapses between these

neurons exist, the split GFPs would form a complete one and be recognized by a mouse antibody

(Figure S2A-C).

Immunohistochemistry All staining processes were performed in 1.5 ml Eppendorf tubes. Late

third-instar (96-100h after egg laying) larval brains were dissected in dissection solution (300

mOsmol/L). Brains were fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde (PFA, Electron Microcopy Sciences, Cat.

No. 15713) for 1 hour on ice. After three washes (0.1% bovine serum albumin in 10mM PBS,

Sigma Life Sciences A9647), brains were incubated in the blocking and permeabilization solution

(0.2% Triton X-100 in 10mM PBS with 5% normal goat serum; Triton-X 100, Sigma, T8532; NGS,

Sigma-Aldrich, G9023) for 2 hours at room temperature. Incubation with primary antibodies was

done overnight at 4°C. After three washes, brains were incubated in the secondary antibodies

for two hours. Both the primary and secondary antibodies were diluted in the blocking and

permeabilization solution. GFP antibody (Rabbit, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Cat. No. A6455,

1:1000), TH antibody (Mouse, Immunostar, Cat. No. 22941, 1:1000), goat anti-rabbit with green

fluorescence (Invitrogen, Alexa Fluor 488 conjugate, Cat. No. A-11035, 1:1000), and goat anti-

mouse IgG with far-red fluorescence (Alexa Fluor 633 conjugate, Cat. No. 21052, 1:500)

secondary antibodies were used. After three washes, brains were transferred and mounted in

the Fluoro-Gel with Tris Buffer (Electron Microcopy Sciences, Cat. No. 17985-10) on a piece of

micro cover glasses (Electron Microcopy Sciences, Cat. No. 72200-41). Finally, the samples were

covered with another piece of micro cover glasses.

A seven-day staining protocol was used for staining of GFP-tagged D2R or GRASP, in which

brains were fixed in 1% paraformaldehyde in Schneider's insect medium (Sigma Life Science,

Cat.NO. S0146) overnight at 4°C. In the second day, the brains were rinsed and washed twice

with PAT3 solution (0.5% Triton X-100 in 10mM PBS with 0.5% BSA), each for 1 hour. Then brains

were incubated in the blocking and permeabilization solution (3% NGS in PAT3) for 2 hours at

room temperature. Incubation of primary antibodies was done overnight at 4°C. On the third day,

brains were rinsed and washed twice with PBT solution, then incubated in the secondary

antibodies for five days. Both the primary and secondary antibodies were diluted in the PBTN

solution. In the staining of GFP-tagged D2R, GFP antibody (Rabbit, ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat.

No. A6455, 1: 1000), TH antibody (Mouse, Immunostar, Cat. No. 22941, 1:1000), and mCherry

antibody (Rat, ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. M11217, 1:1000) were used. For staining of

GRASP, GFP antibody (Mouse, ThermoFisher Scientific, Cat. No. G6539, 1:100) was used. Goat

anti-rabbit with green fluorescence (Invitrogen, Alexa Fluor 488 conjugate, Cat. No. A-11035,

1:1000), goat anti-mouse with green fluorescence (Alexa Fluor 488 conjugate, Cat. No. A11029,

1:1000), goat anti-mouse with far-red fluorescence (Alexa Fluor 633 conjugate, Cat. No. A21052,

1:500), and goat anti-rat with red fluorescence (Alexa Fluor 546 conjugate, Cat. No. A-11081,

1:1000) secondary antibodies were used. In the seventh day, brains were rinsed and washed

twice with PBT solution, and then transferred and mounted in the Fluoro-Gel with Tris Buffer on

a piece of micro cover glasses. Finally, the samples were covered with another piece of micro

cover glasses.

Confocal imaging All images were obtained with a Zeiss Laser Scanning Microscope 510 (LSM510,

Carl Zeiss, Inc., USA). Under 40× and 100× objective magnifications, images were collapsed from

confocal stacks of 1.0 μm optical slices. Under 25× objective magnifications, images were

collapsed from confocal stacks of 2.0 μm optical slices. Under 10× objective magnifications,

images were collapsed from confocal stacks of 12.5 μm optical slices. ImageJ software was used

to remove other signals outside of the mushroom bodies, as the background noise in GRASP is

strong.

Larval olfactory learning assays A single odor learning paradigm was slightly modified from

previous publication[17,18]. In brief, 25 to 50 third-instar larvae (92–96 h after egg laying) were

trained on a 2.5% agar plate (100mm petri dish) covered with 2 mL of 1 M sucrose solution (SUC,

Sigma, Cat. No. S1888) or 0.1% quinine hemisulfate solution (QUI, Sigma, Cat. No. 22640).

Distilled water (DW) was used as a control. An odorant pentyl acetate (PA, 10μL, Sigma-Aldrich,

CAT. No. 109584) was placed on a small piece of filter inside the lid. After 30 minutes, larvae were

rinsed and transferred to the middle line of a new 2.5% agar plate. A small piece of filter paper

with 2.5μL pentyl acetate was placed on one side of the plate, while distilled water on the other

side. After 5 min, the numbers of larvae in the two semicircular areas were counted and the

response index (R.I.) was calculated with the following equation (Figure 2G):

$$R.I. = \frac{\#\ of\ larvae\ on\ odorant\ side\ in\ dashline - \#\ of\ larvae\ on\ DW\ side\ in\ dashline}{Total\ \#\ of\ larvae\ on\ two\ sides\ in\ dashlines}$$

Naïve Olfactory Test Larvae were transferred into the midline of test plates. Two and half

microliters of odorant were added on one side and distilled water on the other side. The number

of larvae in two semicircular areas were counted and the R.I. was calculated after 5 min.

Naïve Gustatory Test A petri dish with a median separator was used. Both sides were filled with

1% agar, with 2 mL of distilled water on the control side, and with 1 M sucrose (SUC) solution, or

0.1% quinine hemisulfate (QUI) solution on the test side. Twenty larvae were put on each side

near the midline and allowed to move for 5 min. Gustatory R.I. was calculated using the larvae

numbers on two sides[90].

Larval locomotion assay Individual larvae were placed on the surface of a plate of 2.5% agar

mixed with 1mL India ink. They were allowed to acclimate for 1 min, and then a video was

recorded for 30 seconds using a Moticam3 digital camera (Motic) and Motic Images Plus 2.0

software. The video was analyzed by the MTrack2 plug-in (from

http://valelab.ucsf.edu/~nico/IJplugins/MTrack2.html) in ImageJ. The path was recorded; scores

were quantified as the length traveled per minute as previously described[91]. As the locomotion

speed of DAN-c1 homozygous was slow, DAN-c1 × WT was used as the control group.

Learning assays with thermogenetics In learning assays with thermogenetics, 25 to 50 third-

instar larvae (92–96 h after egg laying) were trained on a 2.5% agar plate (100mm petri dish)

covered with 2 mL of 1 M SUC or 0.1% QUI. DW was used as a control. An odorant PA was placed

on a small piece of filter inside the lid. Training plates were put in a water bath either under 22°C

or 34°C. After 30 minutes, larvae were rinsed and transferred to the testing plate. After 5 min,

the response index (R.I.) was calculated.

Learning assays with optogenetics In learning assays with optogenetics, egg laying plates with

1mM ATR (all-trans retinal, Sigma, Cat. No. R2500) were used. All-trans retinal (ATR) is a

necessary light-isomerizable chromophore for ChR2, which is not synthesized by *Drosophila*.[92,93]

Around 50 third-instar larvae were trained in a 35mm petri dish with 2 mL of either 1 M SUC

or 0.1% QH solutions. DW was used as a control. During training, an odorant was placed on a

small piece of filter inside the lid. To activate channelrhodopsin2, a LED (Luxeon Rebel Color LEDs,

07040 PB000-D, wavelength 470 nm) with a power supply (GW Instek, Laboratory DC power

supply Model GPS-1830D) was used. The intensity of the blue light was 25 mW, measured by a

laser power meter (Sanwa, LP1). After being trained for 30 minutes, larvae were rinsed and

transferred to the middle line of a 2.5% agar plate in 100 mm test plate. A small piece of filter

paper with pentyl acetate was placed on one side of the plate, while distilled water on the other

side. Then the number of larvae in the two semicircular areas were counted and the R.I. was

calculated after 5 min.

Quantification and Statistical Analysis Quantification of the fluorescent intensity of D2R

knockdown was performed as follows. TH signals was used to define dopaminergic neurons, and

the mean fluorescent intensity of GFP in each neuron was calculated with subtraction of the

background. The mean intensity of DM1 was divided by that of pPAM, and the value in the

knockdown group was subsequently normalized with the control group. Information for

statistical analysis is provided in figure legends.

Supplemental information

Figure S1. GFP expression patterns in the larval CNS by GAL4 driver strains used in this study. **(A-N)** Representative pictures show the patterns of distinct GAL4 driver strains crossed with a UAS-GFP strain. **(O)** A representative picture shows the pattern of MB247-LexA driver (MB247-LexA::VP16) crossed with a LexAop-RFP strain (LexAop-rCD2::RFP). Blue channel represents neuropils marked by nc82 antibody. Driver strains in **(A-J)** were used in **Figure 1D-M.** Driver strains in **(K-M)** are strains used in supplementary **Figure S3**. 201Y-Gal4 (N) is the driver strain used in **Figure 6**. Scale bar: 200 μm.

Figure S2. Controls for GRASP experiments. (A-C) The GRASP signals were not observed in control groups. The first column shows the mouse anti-GFP staining (green) for GRASP signals, the second column shows MB lobes by RFP (red), and the third column shows the rabbit anti-GFP staining (blue) which only recognizes the spGFP1-10. **(A)** Both GRASP (mouse antibody, green) and spGFP1-10 (rabbit antibody, blue) can be recognized in the lower peduncle (LP) compartment (white arrows), in a larval brain expressing spGFP1-10 under TH-Gal4 and spGFP11 under MB247-LexA. Some strong spGFP1-10 signals outside of MB are also colocalized with GRASP signals (yellow arrowheads). **(B)** GRASP signals are hardly observed in a larval brain only expressing spGFP1-10 under TH-Gal4 (no MB247-LexA in this brain), while anti-spGFP1-10 signals are still strong (magenta arrows). **(C)** Neither GRASP nor spGFP1-10 can be recognized in a larval brain only expressing spGFP11 under MB247-LexA (cyan arrowheads). **(D)** A Schematic diagram shows the mechanism of GRASP. Modified from Macpherson et. al.[89]. Scale bars: 20 μm.

Figure S3. D2R-GAL4 strains support the expression pattern of D2R. (A-B) Control staining for D2R-tagged GFP in **Figure 3**. The green channel represents GFP signals whereas magenta represents neuropils marked by nc82 antibody. GFP staining in WT (A). Secondary antibody only staining for the D2R-tagged GFP strain (B). **(C-E)** D2R-GAL4 strains support the expression of D2R in some DANs. The green channel represents GFP signals, red represents mCherry signals under D2R-GAL4 drivers, and blue marks DANs with TH antibodies. R72C08 labels three DM1 neurons (C). R72C04 labels one DM1 (D) and two DL2b neurons (E). **(F-H)** D2R-GAL4 strains support the expression of D2R in mushroom body neurons. The green channel represents GFP signals, and red represents mCherry signals under D2R-GAL4 drivers. R72D03 marks some MBNs in mushroom body (F). R72C08 labels some MBNs in axons (G), dendrites and soma (H). **(I)** D2R is absent in the core of mushroom body lobes, from a transection view of the lower peduncle. Scale bars: 200 μm (**A and B**); 20 μm (**C-E, G-I**), 50 μm (**F**).

Figure S4. D2Rs in DAN-d1 and DAN-g1 are not necessary for aversive learning. (A-B) Dendrites and axons of DAN-d1 (A) and g1 (B) are labeled by DenMark (red) and sytGFP (green), correspondingly. **(C-D)** D2Rs are expressed in DAN-d1 (C) and DAN-g1 (D). The expression pattern of D2R is shown with tagged-GFP, DAN-g1 and d1 are marked by mCherry, and DANs are labeled by TH-antibody (blue). **(E)** Knockdown D2R in neither in DAN-g1 nor DAN-d1 impairs aversive

learning. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001. For N numbers, see Table S3. **(F)** The gene structure of D2R, the insertion site of GFP, and the D2R-microRNA targeting sequence are shown in a schematic diagram. Modified from Xie and Ho[61]. Scale bars: 50 μm (A and B), 20 μm (C and D).

Figure S5. Knockdown D2R in DAN-c1 with a RNAi strain also impairs aversive learning. (A) Knockdown of D2R with D2R-miR in DAN-c1 impairs larval aversive learning when using propionic acid as the odorant. **(B)** Knockdown of D2R in DAN-c1 with a RNAi strain also impairs larval aversive learning when using pentyl acetate as the odorant, while knockdown of D2R in either DAN-d1 or g1 does not affect learning. **(C)** Knockdown of D2R with D2R-miR in DANs under TH-GAL4 impairs larval aversive learning when using pentyl acetate as the odorant. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, *p < 0.01, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001. For N numbers, see Table S3.

Figure S6. Naïve sensory and motor functions of *Drosophila* larvae. (A-E) The naïve sensory and motor functions in larvae related to D2R-miR experiments. **(A)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve olfactory tests toward pentyl acetate (PA). **(B)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve olfactory tests toward propionic acid (ProA). **(C)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve gustatory tests toward quinine (QUI). **(D)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve gustatory tests toward sucrose (SUC). **(E)** No significant difference is found between strains and WT, except DAN-c1. So, larvae from DAN-c1 × WT are used for all behavioral assays (refer to **I**). **(F-I)** The naïve sensory and motor functions in larvae related to RNAi experiments. **(F)** No significant difference exists between strains and WT. **(G)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve gustatory tests toward QUI. **(H)** No significant difference exists between strains in naïve gustatory tests toward SUC. **(I)** There is a significant difference between strains in larval locomotion speed, and there is significant difference between DAN-d1, DAN-d1 × RNAi and WT, but these differences do not affect the learning ability of larvae. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. One-way ANOVA, Tukey multiple comparisons test. For N numbers, see Table S3.

Figure S7. Over-excitation of DANs during learning impairs larval aversive learning. Third instar larvae with ChR2 expression in most DANs (TH-Gal4) were used. Activation of DANs during training impairs larval aversive learning (**A**), while keeps appetitive learning intact (**C**). No learning behaviors are observed in the control distilled water (DW) groups **(B)**. Data are shown as mean ± SEM. Two-way ANOVA, Dunnett multiple comparisons test, ***p < 0.001. For N numbers, see Table S4.

Supplementary Tables

Table S1. Other strains used in this study.

Table S2. N numbers of learning assays with thermogenetics.

Table S3. N numbers of DD2R knockdown experiments.

Table S4. N numbers of learning assays with optogenetics

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1046

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

Table 1

	Strains	Name in this work	Neurons in third-instar larval brains		Analogs	Stock #	Source/Gift
			DANs	Non-DANs			
1	TH-Gal4	-	All DANs except pPAM	Some weak	All DANs except PAM (Adult)	-	Dr. J. Hirsh's Lab
2	TH-C'	-	1 DL1, 1 DM1, 3DL2a	Rare	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	Dr. M. Wu's lab (Liu et al., 2012)
3	TH-C1	-	-	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
4	TH-D'	-	3DL1, 2DL2b	Rare	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
5	TH-D1	-	-	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
6	TH-D4	-	-	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
7	TH-F1	-	3DL1	Rare	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
8	Th-F2	-	3 DM1, 2-4 DL1, 2DL2a	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
9	Th-F3	-	3 DM1b, 1 DL1	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
10	TH-G1	-	2-3 DM1, 2-4 DL1, 2 DL2b	-	PPL1 + PPM3 (Adult)	-	
11	R30G08	-	h1, i1, weak k1	-	2 pPAM (L3)	48101	BDSC (Rohwedder et al., 2016)
12	R58E02	-	h1, i1, j1	1	3 pPAM (L3)	41347	
13	R64H06	-	h1, i1, j1, k1	Lots	4 pPAM (L3)	49608	
14	MB315C	-	1-3 pPAM (h1)	Lots	PAM-γ5 (Adult)	-	Janelia Farm (Aso et al., 2014)
15	MB109B	-	-	-	PAM-β'2a (Adult)	-	

16	MB301B	-	-	-	PAM-β2β'2a (Adult)	-	
17	MB056B	-	-	-	PAM-β'2p (Adult)	-	
18	MB032B	-	-	-	PAM-β'2m (Adult)	-	
19	MB312B	-	-	-	PAM-γ4/<γ1γ2 (Adult)	-	
20	MB194B	-	-	-	PAM-β1ped (Adult)	-	
21	MB063B	-	-	-	PAM-β1 (Adult)	-	
22	MB043B	-	h1, i1, j1	Weak, lots of MBN	PAM-α1 (Adult)	-	
23	MB441B	-	-	-	PAM-γ3 (Adult)	-	
24	MB025B	-	-	-	PAM-β'1ap/m (Adult)	-	
25	MB438B	-	-	-	PPL1-γ1pedc (Adult)	-	
26	MB296B	DAN-d1	d1	Some in VNC	PPL1-γ2α'1 (Adult)	-	
27	MB304	-	-	-	PPL1-α'3 (Adult)	-	
28	MB058B	-	-	-	PPL1-α'2α'2 (Adult)	-	
29	MB065B	-	c1, f1, e1	-	PPL1-α3 (Adult)	-	
30	GMR_SS01716	DAN-g1	g1	-	g1 (LVL) (L3)	-	Dr. M. Zlatic's Lab (Saumerber et al., 2018)
31	GMR_SS01696	DAN-h1	h1 + i1	-	h1 (SHA) (L3)	-	
32	GMR_SS00864	DAN-i1	i1	1	i1 (UT) (L3)	-	
33	GMR_SS1757	DAN-k1	k1	1	k1 (LT) (L3)	-	
34	R78E04	-	1 weak DL1	Several	d1 (LA) (L3)	39997	
35	R72B05	-	1 DL1	Lots	MBIN-e2 (L3)	39611	
36	R12C11	-	2 DM1b	Several	MBON-c2 (L3)	76324	
37	R30F04	-	weak d1	Rare	d1 (LA) (L3)	48614	

#	Name						Source
38	R76C04	-	c1, d1	Rare	c1 (LP) (L3)	48621	
39	R37D06	-	-	-	f1 (IVL) (L3)	47921	
40	R14E06	-	2 DL1	Several	MBIN-e2 (L3)	48643	
41	TH-C-AD;R76F05-DBD	-	1 weak DL1, 2 strong DM1	Lots	PPL1 (SMP-PED) (Adult)	-	Dr. M. Wu's Lab (Xie et al., 2018)
42	TH-F-AD;R61H03-DBD		2DL2, 3 DM1	Rare	PPL1 (SMP) (Adult)	-	
43	R76F02-AD;TH-F-DBD	-	c1, e1	Lots weak	PPL1 (MB-MP1) (Adult)	-	
44	TH-F-AD;R76F05-DBD	-	1 weak DL1, 1-2 strong DM1	Several	PPL1 (SMP-γ) (Adult)	-	
45	R76F02-AD;R60F07-DBD	-	c1, f1, e1	Rare	PPL1 (PED, MB-MP1) (Adult)	-	
46	R60F07-AD;R76F05-DBD	-	g1, e1	Strong SOG	PPL1 (SMP-γ) (Adult)	-	
47	DAT-B-AD;R76F05-DBD	-	2-3pPAM, 1 DL1	Rare	PPL1 (hSMP-γ) (Adult)	-	
48	R76F02-AD;R55C10-DBD	DAN-c1	c1	-	PPL1 (MB-MP1) (Adult)	-	
49	R76F02-AD;R76F01-DBD	-	1 weak DL1	Lots	PPL1 (dFB) (Adult)	-	
50	R76F02-AD;R76F05-DBD	-	-	Lots	PPL1 (dFB) (Adult)	-	
51	R76F05-AD;R61H03-DBD	-	1 DL1, 2 pPAM, 3 DM1	1	PPL1 (MB-MV1) (Adult)	-	
52	WED-1	-	-	-	WED (Adult)	-	Dr. M. Wu's Lab (Liu et al., 2017)
53	WED-2	-	-	-	WED (Adult)	-	
54	TH-FLP/UAS-FRT>>FRT-CD8::GFP;R39G05	-	-	-	PPL1 (bSMP-γ) (Adult)	50063	
55	TH-FLP/UAS-FRT>>FRT-CD8::GFP;R17C11	-	-	-	PPL1 (V1 & MP1) (Adult)	48763	
56	TH-FLP/UAS-FRT>>FRT-CD8::GFP;R39C07	-	2 DL1	-	PPL1 (MV1 & MP1) (Adult)	50039	

| 57 | TH-FLP/UAS-FRT>>FRT-CD8::GFP;R67E08 | - | - | - | PPL1 (V1) (Adult) | 39445 | |

Figure S1

Figure S2

Figure S3

Figure S4

Figure S5

Figure S6

Figure S7

Table S1

	Strains	Information	Source/Gift	Stock #
1	R72C04	D2R-GAL4 driver (verified)	BDSC	49416
2	R72C08	D2R-GAL4 driver (verified)	BDSC	49621
3	R72D03	D2R-GAL4 driver	BDSC	46676
4	D2R-EGFP	EGFP-tagged D2R	BDSC	60276
5	201Y-GFP	GFP expressed in Mushroom Body	BDSC	64296
6	MB247-LexA::Vp16/TM6B	MB-LexA, mushroom body driver	Dr. M. Gallio's Lab	Macpherson et al. 2015
7	UAS-nSyb-spGFP1-10,LexAop-CD4-spGFP11/CyO	GRASP strain	BDSC	64314
8	LexAop-nSyb-spGFP1-10,UAS-CD4-spGFP11;MKRS/TM6B	Reverse GRASP strain	BDSC	64315
9	WT(Canton-S)	Wild type	BDSC	64349 (1)
10	UAS-RNAi(D2R) (III) line 2	UAS-D2R-RNAi	Dr. A. Kopin's Lab	Draper et al. 2007
11	201Y-GAL4	MB-GAL4, mushroom body driver	BDSC	4440
12	CyO/Sco;TM2,Ubx/TM6,Hu.Tb	Ballancer Chromesome	Dr. S. Tanda's Lab	
13	1407-Gal4	Pan-neuronal driver	BDSC	8751
14	10XUAS-mCD8::GFP (I)	GFP strain	BDSC	32189
15	10XUAS-mCD8::GFP (II)	GFP strain	BDSC	32186
16	10XUAS-mCD8::GFP (III)	GFP strain	BDSC	32184
17	UAS-ChR2; UAS-ChrR2	Optogenetics strain	Dr. B. Condron's Lab	
18	LexAop-rCD2::RFP; UAS-CD4-spGFP1-10, LexAop-CD4-spGFP11	RFP expressed in MB; GRASP	BDSC	58755
19	UAS-CD8::mCherry (II)	mCherry strain	BDSC	27391
20	UAS-CD8::mCherry (III)	mCherry strain	BDSC	27392
21	yw1118	Wild type for D2R-EGFP	Dr. S. Tanda's Lab	
22	D2R-miR	UAS-DD2R-microRNA	Dr. M. Wu's Lab	Xie et al. 2018
23	UAS-*Shibirets1*	Thermogenetics strain	Dr. T. Kitamoto's Lab	
24	UAS-dTRPA1	Thermogenetics strain	BDSC	26263
25	UAS-nsyb::GFP; UAS-DenMark	Pre- and postsynaptic terminals	BDSC	33056

Table S2

	22°C			34°C		
	QUI	DW	SUC	QUI	DW	SUC
shibire[ts1]	9	8	8	9	9	9
DAN-c1×shibire[ts1]	14	6	7	17	6	9
DAN-c1	8	9	9	9	9	9
DAN-c1×dTRPA1	15	14	13	14	15	13
dTRPA1	9	8	9	10	10	10

Table S3

Driver	Cross	Pentyl acetate (PA)			Propionic acid (P-A)			Naïve olfactory		Naïve gustatory		Locomotion
		QUI	DW	SUC	QUI	DW	SUC	PA	P-A	QUI	SUC	
TH ×	miR	8	8	8	6	6	6	7	7	6	6	24
	RNAi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CR	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	12
DAN-c1 ×	miR	38	38	37	14	13	14	12	8	11	12	50
	RNAi	6	6	6	-	-	-	8	-	6	6	24
	CR	14	10	10	11	8	8	12	9	11	12	36
DAN-d1 ×	miR	17	15	13	8	8	7	6	6	6	7	16
	RNAi	6	6	6	-	-	-	7	-	7	6	16
	CR	13	11	10	9	6	6	7	6	6	6	15
DAN-g1 ×	miR	31	22	16	13	8	8	8	8	6	7	22
	RNAi	8	8	6	-	-	-	8	-	6	7	24
	CR	23	19	18	8	8	7	8	6	6	6	15
201Y ×	miR	7	7	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	24
	RNAi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CR	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	24
WT		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	24
D2R-miR		12	12	12	6	6	6	12	6	11	12	36
RNAi		6	6	6	-	-	-	6	-	6	6	20

Table S4

Strains	Groups	BL									No BL		
		Resting			Learning			Testing					
		QUI	DW	SUC	QUI	DW	SUC	QUI	DW	SUC	QUI	DW	SUC
TH×ChR2	ATR	-	-	-	21	13	10	-	-	-	20	16	10
	No ATR	-	-	-	16	13	8	-	-	-	14	13	8
DAN-c1×ChR2	ATR	11	8	9	15	12	9	9	8	8	16	11	9
	No ATR	9	9	8	15	12	8	9	9	9	16	12	9
201Y×ChR2	ATR	8	7	7	9	6	9	7	7	10	11	8	7
	No ATR	10	7	7	10	7	7	9	7	13	12	10	7