

Locus coeruleus: implications for psychiatry Locus coeruleus: implicaciones para la psiquiatría.

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The role of the LC in psychiatric disorders has been studied over the last several years employing a variety of methods. Studies have suggested a number of neurophysiological, neuropharmacological and behavioral effects of this central noradrenergic nucleus that might be a part of the neural substrate for the normal emotions. The LC is the largest of the NA nuclei, the source of over 70% of the NA transmitter in the brain, and principal source of innervation of brain regions likely to be involved in complex behaviors. This nucleus has implications to vigilance as well as global orientation of behavior towards imperative, environmental sensory stimuli. Yet, more recent information regarding the visceral regulation of LC provides new biological aspects on behavior and mental functions which allow a more integrated view of the role of NA in the overall functioning of the individual. This review summarizes these findings and outlines several implications for psychiatry.