

Download The Neurobiology Of Opiate Reward Processes

Opiates (heroin, morphine, etc.) The human body naturally produces its own opiate-like substances and uses them as neurotransmitters. These substances include endorphins, enkephalins, and dynorphin, often collectively known as endogenous opioids. The reward system is a group of neural structures responsible for incentive salience (i.e., motivation and "wanting", desire, or craving for a reward), associative learning (primarily positive reinforcement and classical conditioning), and positively-valenced emotions, particularly ones which involve pleasure as a core component (e.g., joy ...ARTICLE OVERVIEW: The "opiate" class of medications includes illegal drugs like heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and prescription pain relievers such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), codeine, morphine, and many others. Methadone maintenance treatment (MMT), a form of opioid replacement therapy, reduces and/or eliminates the use of illegal opiates, the criminality associated with opiate use, and allows patients to improve their health and social productivity.