

SEMINAIRE DE MAÎTRISE  
ORIENTATIONS PSYCHOLOGIE COGNITIVE  
ET PSYCHOLOGIE DU DEVELOPPEMENT

**JEUDI 12 OCTOBRE 2017**

**9H30 – 11H**

Salle B01.2426.a Centre Médical Universitaire (CMU)

**«STRESS, MEMORY AND AGING »**

**Sonia J. Lupien. Ph.D.**

Director, Centre for Studies on Human Stress  
University of Montreal

«In the last two decades, there have been many factors studied as potential biomarkers of cognitive impairments in later life. One of the factors that received increased attention is the secretion of stress hormones. Stress hormones are liposoluble, and they have the capacity to cross the blood-brain barrier and access the brain, where they can influence cognitive process as well as emotional processing. In this presentation, I will summarize the results of a series of studies showing that cumulative exposure to high endogenous levels of the stress hormone glucocorticoid (cortisol in humans) in an older population predicts both memory impairments and a reduction in hippocampal volume. We also have shown that aged human memory can be acutely modulated by acute stress and/or by pharmacological manipulations of glucocorticoids. Finally, we have shown that the testing environment in which we test older adults can be stressful for them and lead to spurious memory impairments that can be misdiagnosed as 'mild cognitive impairments'. Altogether, these results suggest that stress can be a potent factor modulating cognitive performance in old age»



**UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE**

**FACULTÉ DE PSYCHOLOGIE  
ET DES SCIENCES DE L'ÉDUCATION**