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*Endogenous Dopaminergic Signaling in the Lateral
Parabrachial Nucleus Modulates Mechanical Nociception*

Dr. La is an Associate Professor in the Department of Neurobiology and the Cecil H. and Ida M. Green Distinguished Chair in Neuroscience and Cell Biology at the University of Texas Medical Branch. Dr. La has a longstanding research interest in chronic pain and the development of therapeutic tools to manage this debilitating condition. His current research focuses on unraveling the endogenous mechanisms that modulate nociceptive circuits at both spinal and supraspinal levels. Using preclinical animal models and employing behavioral and Ca²⁺-imaging approaches, his laboratory is investigating how the ongoing activity of nociceptors modulates nociceptive circuits in the dorsal horn, leading to pain hypersensitivity. Additionally, the research delves into understanding how endogenous dopaminergic signaling in the lateral parabrachial nucleus contributes to nociception. Beyond these efforts to comprehend chronic pain mechanisms, Dr. La's laboratory is developing novel pain therapeutics designed to facilitate endogenous pain resolution mechanisms, aiming to convert chronic pain back to normally resolving pain.