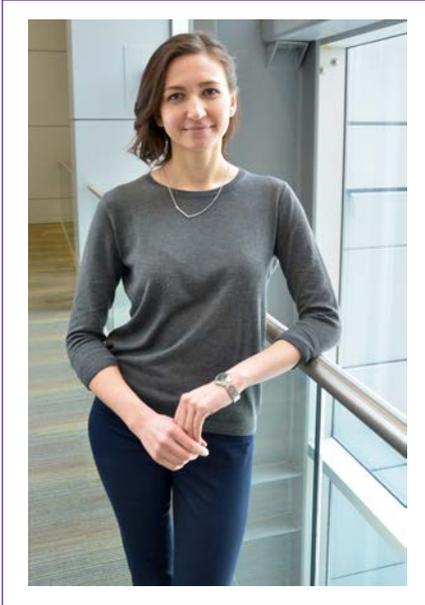


Maria Pavlova



Biography

Maria is a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at the University of Calgary, working under the supervision of Dr. Melanie Noel. Maria completed her undergraduate degree in Psychology at the University of Calgary. Following her graduation, Maria worked as a lab coordinator Alberta Children's Pain Research Lab (PI: Dr. Noel), where she was responsible for setting up and coordinating several large-scale studies examining acute and chronic pediatric pain.

Maria developed a particular interest in examining children's memories for painful experiences as well as ways to reframe those memories. She intends to pursue this line of research in her Master's project. Specifically, the key focus of Maria's research project will be to examine the efficacy and feasibility of a brief parent-delivered memory reframing intervention in pediatric populations in the context of post-surgical pain (tonsillectomies). The intervention will be developed based on the principles of Patient-Oriented Research and will be used to improve patient health outcomes and alter the trajectory of pediatric pain. The project will be conducted in close collaboration with pediatric anesthesiologists and Ear, Nose, and Throat surgeons at Alberta Children's Hospital.

Project Summary

Reframe the Pain: A Parent-Led Intervention to Alter Children's Memories for Pain

Pain in childhood is common. How children remember pain robustly predicts their future pain experiences. Distressing pain memories (e.g., remembering more pain as compared to initial reports) may lead to worse future pain and higher pain-related distress. Children's memories for pain can be altered to reduce detrimental effects of memory biases. Only a few studies have examined the memory reframing interventions aimed to reduce negative biases in memories and subsequent pain and fear. These techniques have not been used to target children's memory of post-surgical pain, which is often long-lasting and distressing. Previous interventions were not led

by parents, who are powerful agents of change in the context of children’s recall and pain experiences. Parental reminiscing has a profound effect on how children remember other past events. Specifically, parents who use more unique information and open-ended questions have children who recall past events more accurately. Drawing from existing and our emerging research on memory reframing techniques, the study will be the first to examine a parent-led intervention aimed to positively alter children’s memories of post-surgical pain.

The intervention will be created with guidance from families who have gone through the tonsillectomy. We will teach parents to talk to their children in the most adaptive ways about distressing painful experiences, which will lead to a more accurate and less distressing recall of pain. Patients will also assess how helpfulness of the intervention. The study will be the first to develop a family-centered intervention for altering children’s memories for post-surgical pain.