

RENE KAHN: What drives me in my work is that I'm a doctor first and foremost. And that's why I went to medical school. That's why I went to psychiatry, because I want to help patients. So that's really what drives me. To help patients have a better life.

What I do is I study schizophrenia, which is very important brain disease in psychiatry, affecting about 1% of the worldwide population. And what I'm particularly studying is the brain changes that occur prior to and after the onset of the illness.

My lab has shown that there are progressive brain changes in schizophrenia. We are starting to understand now not only that schizophrenia is a brain disease but what kind of brain disease. And what we found is that when the disease progresses over time that there are brain changes that also get worse over time. These brain changes are particularly related to the outcome in the patient. So if the patients do worse, the brain changes are larger.

A progressive if not degenerative nature would probably start after the illness has manifested itself. So that second part, the progression in the brain changes, we really need to be able to reverse. And if we want to prevent the illness, we need to understand what the developmental abnormalities are that lead to the illness.

Mount Sinai it has a very long tradition in psychiatry. Actually, I was trained here. You can't be a good clinician if you don't understand the research. And here at Sinai, they go hand in glove.

[MUSIC PLAYING]