Gene to gene interactions important to trait variance

Gaining more insight into predicting how genes affect physical or behavioral traits by charting the genotype-phenotype map holds promise to speed discoveries in personalized medicine. But figuring out exactly how genes interact has left parts of the map invisible.

In a paper published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, North Carolina State University genetics researchers reveal some of the hidden portions of the map, showing that complicated networks of gene-gene interactions in fruit flies greatly influence the variance in quantitative traits, or characteristics that are influenced by multiple genes – like sensitivity to alcohol or aggression.

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