

## NYTimes' "Autism's Unexpected Link to Cancer Gene": an old story, made murky

Perhaps you saw the New York Times headline. God knows, it was eye catching enough: "Autism's Unexpected Link to Cancer Gene."

That headline and the utterly confusing story that followed both fail to emphasize some important clarifications: First, the gene in question isn't just a "cancer gene." It's a gene that regulates the cell cycle, and changes in these genes can and do have effects that aren't confined to cancer. Calling it a "cancer" gene in this context is inflammatory, at best.

Autistic people and their families deserve more care than this, and readers of the New York Times deserve careful, accurate science writing placed in an appropriate context.

Read the full, original story here: [Autism And Cancer Are Not Parallels](#)

### Additional Resources:

- "[Autism's Unexpected Link to Cancer Gene](#)," New York Times  
*The New York Times article that is the subject of criticism.*
- "[Autism and cancer share genetic roots, researchers find](#)," Simons Foundation  
*Virginia Hughes wrote about the common roots of autism and cancer first back in August of 2008. This article offers a more clear description of the genes under investigation.*