

## Gene expression profiling study finds biomarkers related to suicide risk

RNA biomarkers in the blood may be able to identify people who are at risk of committing suicide, according to a study in *Molecular Psychiatry*.

The researchers searched for genes that were differentially expressed in the blood of people with bipolar disorder — about one in three people with bipolar disorder attempt suicide during their life — who had a shift from no suicide ideation to high suicide ideation over the course of the study period.

Researchers then conducted whole-genome gene expression profiling on blood samples taken from those men before and after the change to their suicide ideation states and, as a result, identified more than 860 differentially-expressed genes that may have a link to suicide ideation.

Read the full, original story here: [Gene Expression Profiling Study Finds Biomarkers Related to Suicide Risk](#)

### Additional Resources:

- [“Suicide in the blood – experts respond,”](#) Scoop  
*Scoop’s Science Media Center gathered a few expert opinions on the content of this study, including the following critical commentary from Professor Matthew Hotopf, Professor of General Hospital Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry (IOP), King’s College London:*  
  
“It’s one thing to find a biomarker which might be associated at a statistical level with suicide/suicidal behaviour. It’s quite another to use it to make any kind of prediction which has clinical utility. To do this, one needs very large effect sizes and specificity.  
  
“So these findings may attract media attention, but they are very much preliminary and my money would be on (a) failed replication and even if replication was successful (b) lack of predictive power to be a useful clinical tool.”
- [“Discovery and validation of blood biomarkers for suicidality,”](#) Nature  
*Read the text of the study at Nature’s website.*
- [“Blood test can tell if you are suicidal,”](#) Times of India  
*The Times of India takes first place in the media competition to overstate the conclusions of the study via dramatic headlines. The actual text of the story makes the study scope more clear, thankfully.*