

## Ancient tooth's DNA adds Denisovians to human family tree

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

DNA extracted from a fossilized tooth, confirmed the presence of one of our elusive ancient cousins only recently discovered, the Denisovians.

These ancient relatives lived in the Caucasus mountains tens of thousands of years ago. And recent DNA tests show that the Denisovians — named after the Siberian cave their remains were discovered in — co-existed and even likely interbred with Neanderthals and early Homo sapiens, according to a paper [recently published in the \*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences\*](#).

Likely cousins of Neanderthals and Homo sapiens, these hunter-gatherers suggest that our lineage may be much more complicated.

“The world at that time must have been far more complex than previously thought,” study author Susanna Sawyer [tells Michael Greshko for \*National Geographic\*](#). “Who knows what other hominids lived and what effects they had on us?”

The new tooth, called “Denisova 8,” appears to be at least 110,000 years old, roughly 60,000 years older than the other two specimens. The Denisovans were more closely related to Neanderthals, having diverged from Homo sapiens about 500,000 years ago. Yet genetic scans suggest that Denisovans interbred with both Neanderthals and Homo sapiens, as well as possibly a fourth unknown species, [Sarah Kaplan writes for \*The Washington Post\*](#).

**Read full, original post:** [DNA from a Huge Tooth Confirms a New Ancient Cousin](#)