

Genetic evidence identifies schizophrenia as ‘modern’ disease

Schizophrenia is a “modern” disease, which developed after humans diverged from Neanderthals, [between 300,000 and 700,000 years ago](#). Scientists say no genetic evidence suggests early hominids suffered from the psychiatric disorder.

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[A]n international research team has compared the genetic information of Neanderthal men and early humans, suggesting that schizophrenia may in fact be a side effect of the evolutionary changes that led Homo sapiens to diverge from its closest known relative, Neanderthal.

The scientists have identified an association between genetic risk for schizophrenia, and markers of human evolution.

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The researchers’ hypothesis is that schizophrenia could constitute the downside of advantageous gene variants linked to the acquisition of human traits, like language and complex cognitive skills. They believe these beneficial skills might also be linked to genes that increase our propensity to developing psychoses.

“Our findings suggest that schizophrenia vulnerability rose after the divergence of modern humans from Neanderthals, and thus support the hypothesis that schizophrenia is a by-product of the complex evolution of the human brain”, concludes lead author Ole Andreassen.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Schizophrenia is a ‘modern’ disease, developing after humans diverged from Neanderthals](#)