

Excessive hand washing? Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) linked to gene mutations associated with autism

We know obsessive-compulsive disorder has a genetic basis, and now researchers are digging into our DNA to figure out exactly what it is.

[A recent study] points the finger at five gene mutations that affect proteins called kainate receptors. In an experiment, mice without those receptors displayed behaviors associated with OCD, such as grooming themselves too much, and motor impairments. The researchers say their findings link the receptors with [corticostriatal](#) function, a reference to connections in our brains that are associated with, among other things, “habitual behaviors.”

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Previous research has put kainate receptors under the microscope, linking them to OCD as well as other psychiatric conditions or developmental disorders like autism. According to lead author and Northwestern physiology and neurobiology professor Anis Contractor, the new findings support that idea. “People with OCD are known to have abnormalities in function of corticostriatal circuits.”

[The study can be found [here](#).]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [OCD Causes 2017: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Linked To Genetic Mutation; Brain Circuit That Regulates Habits ID'd By Scientists](#)