

Feel anxious around people? Your genetics may be suppressing your serotonin flow

A new study has discovered that the serotonin transporter gene SLC6A4 is strongly linked to the chances of developing social anxiety disorders (SAD).

SAD, also known as social phobia, is a relatively common, heritable psychiatric condition that relies on a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Despite their prevalence, there has been very limited genetic research into the disorders...The authors of this study have claimed that this is the largest association study completed so far, genotyping 321 people with SAD and 804 controls without social phobia.

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[Researchers] were able to identify a quantitative association between SAD and avoidance behaviors. Their research demonstrated that Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) within the SLC6A4 gene were frequently correlated with increased occurrence of social anxiety behaviors.

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“Not only did individuals with social phobia make more serotonin than people without such a disorder, they also pump back more serotonin,” said Andreas Frick, a doctoral student at Uppsala University. “We believe that this is an attempt to compensate for the excess serotonin active in transmitting signals. Serotonin can increase anxiety and not decrease it as was previously often assumed.”

[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: The Genetics of Social Anxiety

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP](#) on Wikipedia.