

Genetics account for 83% of autism risk, re-do study finds

A reanalysis of data from more than 2 million children in Sweden suggests inherited genetic factors account for 83 percent of autism risk. A 2014 study using the same dataset pointed to an equal contribution from genetics and the environment, but experts in the field were [critical of the findings](#), citing flaws in the study's methods. Then, to their surprise, the researchers came up with a heritability estimate of 85 percent using an overlapping dataset of nearly 800,000 Swedish children. That result prompted them to revisit their earlier work.

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"I think it's great that this group of researchers took the trouble, actually, to publicly acknowledge that their previous publication might have been suboptimal," says [Dorret Boomsma](#), professor of biological psychology at Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, who was not involved in the study.

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They applied statistical models that account for the family relationships to estimate the heritability of autism. They calculated that genetics contributes 84.8 percent of autism risk. "I think it has been repeated several times now and we are converging to this number," Sandin says.

He and his colleagues are also using the Swedish registries to study [recurrence of autism](#) within a family — the likelihood that a sibling of a child with autism also has the condition.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Data do-over backs dominance of genetics in autism risk](#)