

High IQ and health: Are more Intelligent people more prone to illnesses?

[A new paper claims](#) that very intelligent people are more prone to mental illnesses and allergies. Mensans reported levels of illness higher than the 'national average':

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Researchers Ruth I. Karpinski and colleagues surveyed the members of [American Mensa](#), a society for people in the top 2% of IQ (IQ 130+). 3,715 Mensans responded to the survey, which asked them whether they were currently diagnosed with various diseases, from depression to asthma. Participants were also asked if they suspect that they might suffer from these conditions.

It turned out that the Mensans reported levels of illness higher than the 'national average':

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First off, the disease prevalence data in this study were based on self-report of current medical diagnoses – the questions asked whether disorders had been “formally diagnosed by a medical professional.” The baseline, 'national average' comparison prevalence rates, however, were not gathered in this way.

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Secondly, I have concerns about the sample. This wasn't a study of high-IQ people. It was a study of Mensans, a self-selected subgroup of high-IQ people. 6.5 million Americans fall in the top 2% of IQ, and only 55,000 of them are members of American Mensa. In other words, Mensans make up about 0.8% of high-IQs, and Karpinski et al. have data from less than 10% of Mensans, so the sample is seriously unrepresentative.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [“Hyper Brains”? High Intelligence and Health](#)