

## Searching for sleep: Genome mining project looks for insomnia links

In a genetic study of unprecedented size, scientists have searched for inherited causes of insomnia in the DNA [of] 1,310,010 people. They found 956 different genes linked to the sleep disorder.

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The project involved crunching genetic and medical information collected from the [UK Biobank](#) and the consumer DNA testing company [23andMe](#). It was led by Danielle Posthuma, a neuroscientist specializing in statistical genetics at Vrije University, in Amsterdam.

Termed a “genome-wide association,” this type of study involves comparing the DNA of people with and without a disease. Doing so can unveil which DNA differences are responsible for it.

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In a preview of their findings [posted online](#), the researchers said the genetic causes they located bore some similarity to those implicated in depression and anxiety. While some insomniacs say they at least have more time to get things done, the scientists found the condition tied to a lesser chance of progressing in school and correlated to shorter life span as well.

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[T]he genes the team tied to the condition still explain less than 10 percent of the overall chance that a person has it. Posthuma called that outcome “a little bit disappointing” given the immense scope of the gene hunt. That can mean only one thing. Even bigger studies lied ahead.

**Read full, original post:** [A search for insomnia genes involving 1.3 million people is the largest genetic study ever](#)