Autism, ADHD linked to mutations in the same genes in new study

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are both known to be heritable, but the details of the genes involved remain unclear. Researchers now report the analysis of exome sequences of approximately 8,000 children with ASD and/or ADHD and 5,000 controls. The researchers discovered that the similarities between the two diagnoses can be linked to changes in the same genes. The new study is the largest study to date of rare mutations in the genome of people with ADHD and autism.

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The researchers from iPSYCH, Denmark's largest research project in the field of psychiatry, found that individuals with ASD and individuals with ADHD had a similar burden of rare protein-truncating variants in evolutionarily constrained genes, contributing to the biological causes of the two child psychiatric disorders.

"The very fact that mutations are found to the same extent and in the same genes in children with autism and in children with ADHD, points towards the same biological mechanisms being involved," said Anders Børglum, PhD, who is a professor at Aarhus University and one of the leading researchers behind the study.

Read full, original post: Autism and ADHD Share a Common Genetic Burden