

Twins study bolsters theory that genetics play a role in coronavirus symptom severity

Symptoms of Covid-19 appear to be partly down to genetic makeup, researchers at King's College London have discovered.

The finding is based on data collected through the Covid-19 Symptom Tracker app, [launched by the team last month](#).

While members of the public are encouraged to use the app to track how they feel day to day, the team also asked thousands of twins in the UK, who were already part of another research project, to use the app and record whether they had symptoms or not. The team employed machine-learning algorithms, together with data from the 2.7 million app users – many of whom have been tested for coronavirus – to work out the combination of symptoms that indicate an individual is likely to have Covid-19.

The team then focused on data from just over 2,600 twins to try to establish whether the symptoms experienced by those predicted to have Covid-19 was related to genetic makeup.

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[T]he team found a substantial genetic influence for the symptoms of fever, diarrhoea, delirium, and losses of taste and smell. By contrast, a hoarse voice, a cough, skipped meals, chest pain, and abdominal pain were not linked to genetic makeup.

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