

East African research finds key facial features are common across diverse populations

A [new study published in *PLOS Genetics*](#) compares genomic factors underlying facial features in East Africans and Europeans to reveal unique and common factors, enhancing our understanding of how genes shape the human face.

The study, led by Chenxing Liu, PhD, Seth Weinberg, PhD, and John Shaffer, PhD, at the University of Pittsburgh is reported in the article, [“Genome scans of facial features in East Africans and cross-population comparisons reveal novel associations.”](#) These findings shed light on the genetic and biological basis underpinning the diversity of human facial structures and may offer insights into developmental mechanisms responsible for facial deformities.

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Shaffer said, “Our findings confirm that the genes connected to human facial features are basically the same across populations. Observed differences were mostly explained by how frequently an allele occurs in a given population. By comparing populations, we were able to uncover genetic signals that would otherwise remain obscured and narrow the field of genetic variants that are functionally impacting facial traits.”

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.**](#)