

NEWS

Sex, age of diagnosis correlate with autism comorbidities

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The likelihood that an autistic person has another condition correlates strongly with the age at which they **received their autism diagnosis**. Also, autistic girls are more likely than non-autistic girls to have other conditions, to a degree not seen in autistic boys.

The study assessed whether an autistic person's age, age of diagnosis or birth sex changed their chance of having any of 11 commonly co-occurring conditions, including epilepsy, anxiety and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It drew on data from roughly 16,000 people with autism and more than 650,000 people without autism up to 16 years old in the **Danish National Patient Registry**, a large dataset that records the birth date and sex of people in the Danish hospital system and all diagnoses they receive.

Among people diagnosed late, at 11 to 15 years old, 26 percent of girls and 13 percent of boys were also **diagnosed with an affective disorder**, the study found. An opposite trend occurred for **intellectual disability**; 40 percent of people with an early autism diagnosis had an intellectual disability, compared with just 10 percent of people with a late autism diagnosis.

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