

SPOTTED

# Spotted around the web: Mitochondrial genome, anorexia nervosa, drowning prevention

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## Research roundup

- Mutations that appear in only some copies of the mitochondrial genome crop up more often in autistic children than in non-autistic children. The findings were mentioned in *Spectrum*'s **roundup of new tools** for studying the mitochondrial genome. *Nature Communications*
- Multiple exemplar training — using a varied set of related examples — can help autistic adolescents and young adults practice social skills and then generalize in real-life settings, according to a review of studies. *Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*
- Induced pluripotent stem cells from people with tuberous sclerosis complex is a useful model for understanding uniquely human aspects of the condition in different tissues. *World Journal of Pediatrics*
- Babies whose umbilical cords were attached away from the placenta's central mass have an elevated chance of showing autism traits. *Spectrum* reported on **placental influences on neurodevelopment** earlier this year. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*
- The Korean version of the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-2 appears to be valid and reliable in children, adolescents and adults. *Molecular Autism*
- Different methods of delivering gene-editing therapies, such as viral vectors and lipid nanoparticles, have various advantages and pitfalls. *Cell*
- Researchers have tied post-synaptic structure and function to behavior in mouse models of autism by mutating various SHANK genes, according to a review. *Pharmacological Research*
- Some adolescents with anorexia nervosa have autism traits, according to a small study. *Spectrum* has covered the link between **anorexia and autism** in depth. *European Eating*

### **Disorders Review**

- A review of ankyrin-G protein isoforms highlights possible neuronal mechanisms for how ANK3 mutations may contribute to neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism.

### **Experimental & Molecular Medicine**

**Location, location:** The ANK3 gene is most concentrated in the cerebellum.

- Telehealth can ease communication and mitigate stress for autistic adults seeking care, but the barriers of the U.S. healthcare system are still present. *Spectrum* examined the **potential of telehealth** in autism assessment earlier this month. **Autism**
- Young autistic children with mild cognitive delay improved more with 2 years of intervention using the Early Start Denver Model than children with more severe cognitive delay. **Frontiers in Psychiatry**
- A person's autism traits are a better predictor of their skill in reading the mental state of others than their ability to describe their own emotions. The findings challenge the so-called **alexithymia hypothesis** of autism that *Spectrum* explored last year. **Molecular Autism**

### **Science and society**

- Heather McCracken, a nurse who had learned that her autistic child has a heightened risk of drowning, has created a package of drowning-prevention resources for parents and clinicians. **Houston Chronicle**
- Air France has announced it will no longer transport nonhuman primates, joining other major airlines with similar policies; scientists say the restrictions will hamper research. **Science**
- Researchers who stutter or have related speech disabilities can have problems in many situations in their careers, such as when giving seminars or networking with colleagues. **Nature**
- Scientific and medical societies grapple with calls to not hold conferences in U.S. states with laws banning or restricting abortions. **Nature**
- Some autism advocates are calling for more autism training for people who staff suicide hotlines, as the new three-digit 988 phone number launches on 16 July. **WUSF**

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