

# Study finds large proportion of intellectual disability is not genetically inherited

September 26 2012

---

New research published Online First in The *Lancet* suggests that a high proportion of severe intellectual disability results from genetic causes that are not inherited. These findings are good news for parents, indicating a low risk of passing on the disorder to further children.

[Intellectual disability](#) affects between 1% and 2% of children worldwide. Although a handful of genes that appear to cause some cases of intellectual disability have been identified, the [genetic causes](#) of the disorder in most people remains unclear, especially those with non-syndromic types which have no obvious physical signs and cause up to 50% of intellectual disability worldwide.

Some evidence suggests that de novo (new) [mutations](#), that show up for the first time in affected children but are not found in their parents, might be a common cause of the disorder.

As a joint effort by the German [Mental Retardation](#) Network led by André Reis from the Institute of Human Genetics, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, the current study used a new technique known as exome sequencing to look for mutations that are not inherited but newly formed in 51 children with unexplained severe non-syndromic intellectual disability (an IQ

Citation: Study finds large proportion of intellectual disability is not genetically inherited (2012, September 26) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-09-large->

[proportion-intellectual-disability-genetically.html](http://proportion-intellectual-disability-genetically.html)

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.