

New obesity, height genes identified

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(Medical Xpress)—Busselton residents and researchers from The University of Western Australia have helped a worldwide scientific collaboration identify new genes associated with height and obesity.

The discovery of four new loci (the specific place on a chromosome where a gene is located) affecting height and seven related to obesity is described in a paper published online today in *Nature Genetics*.

The paper was authored by more than 300 researchers and is the result of a meta-analysis of dozens of studies around the world collating data from more than 263,000 individuals of European background.

UWA contributors included Research Assistant Professor Gemma Cadby of the Centre for [Genetic Origins](#) of Health and Disease, who provided analysis of height and weight data from the long-running Busselton [Health Study](#).

Dr Cadby said the newly discovered genes represented further pieces in the puzzle as researchers sought to understand the [genetic contributions](#) to height and weight.

"They already know of some genes likely to affect height and weight, but these genes only explain a limited amount of the contribution of genetics to these traits," Dr Cadby said. "So a lot of genes still need to be identified, but this is an important step.

"The ultimate goal for [genetic studies](#) is to further the understanding of

human diseases and in doing so, to develop new treatments and ways of preventing disease. Actually translating the results of studies such as this into providing intervention, management and treatments for people who are obese is a long way ahead, but in order to do those things you need to understand the genetics of the disease. We have to get this bit of the puzzle before we can move to the next step."

The paper is titled "Genome-wide meta-analysis identifies 11 new loci for anthropometric traits and provides insights into [genetic architecture](#)."

Provided by University of Western Australia

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