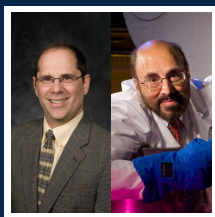


Dismantling the Myths, and Treating Tourette Disorder



Jay Tischfield

Duncan and Nancy MacMillan Distinguished Professor, Genetics, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry

CURRENT RESEARCH

Uncovering the genetic causes of tourette disorder

Tourette Disorder (TD) is defined by having both multiple motor and vocal tics that last for more than one year and onset is typically in early childhood. Tics are sudden, rapid, repeated, non-rhythmic movements (motor tics) or vocalizations (vocal tics). TD is a poorly understood, often debilitating disorder affecting as many as one in a 100 individuals worldwide. For many people, the media has negatively altered the perception of TD. While only a small fraction of individuals with TD experience complex vocal tics such as cursing, many patients have other complex or simple motor or vocal tics as well as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and/or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) that cause long-lasting impairment. Currently, there is no effective, specific treatment for TD. Drs. Gary Heiman and Jay Tischfield at Rutgers University, are seeking to uncover the genetic causes of TD with the hope of developing effective treatments that could improve ameliorate patients' quality of life and restore productivity. Additionally, since TD is frequently associated with OCD, ADHD, anxiety, and depression, understanding genetic mechanisms of causality might also shed light on those often debilitating mental disorders.

Despite decades of evidence supporting a significant genetic contribution, progress in identifying specific risk alleles has been slow. To date, no single risk gene or genetic variation has been established as a uniform cause for TD. A major impediment to progress has been small sample sizes of patients to study. To overcome this hurdle, Drs. Heiman, Tischfield and colleagues formed the Tourette International Collaborative Genetics (TIC Genetics) project. The goal of TIC Genetics is to...

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AFFILIATION



Rutgers University

EDUCATION

- PhD in Biology 1973, Yale University
- M.S. in Biology 1969, Yale University
- B.S. in Biology 1967, City University of New York, Brooklyn College

AWARDS

- Rutgers University Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Research (2011)
- Election as American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow (2007)
- Duncan and Nancy MacMillan Endowed Chair in Genetics (1999)
- Elliot Osserman Award for Distinguished Service in Support of Cancer Research, Israel Cancer Research Fund (1994)
- Distinguished Alumnus Award and Medal, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York (1990)

RESEARCH AREAS

Life Science, Stem Cell, Neurological / Cognitive

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Gary Heiman and Dr. Jay Tischfield as they conduct a comprehensive TIC Genetics study. Such a study would cost \$2M/year for five years. Smaller donations would aid in more directed studies. Tourette's Disorder is an underserved mental illness; donate to research that will make a difference in the lives of those affected by it.