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# Researchers find new method for diagnosis of autism

Mar 21 2017

New method for the diagnosis of autism was found by researchers at Mie University.

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder, characterized by impairments in social interaction, communication and sensory abnormalities, such as sensitivity to sounds (auditory hypersensitivity). Despite intense research, the causes are still unknown. Therefore, the autism diagnosis depends on detailed interview by the doctor, which is very subjective. Thus, a more easy-to-use interview approaches are required.

The research group has traditionally produced autistic model animals and has clarified various features of autism. This time, based on their research results, they found out what seems to be the cause of auditory hypersensitivity in rodent brain for the first time, using an autism model animal. There are two kinds of pathway in the brain: one is excitatory and the other is inhibitory. In autistic model animals, abnormalities were found in the "inhibitory" pathway, which was presumed to be the reason for auditory hypersensitivity.

This abnormal region in the autism model animal brain also play a role in localizing "From which direction the sound is heard". Therefore, by asking the parents, "Does your child seem to know where the sound comes from?" It makes possible a much more clear and precise diagnosis than before. No special medical equipment nor chemicals are necessary, so it can be introduced immediately as a new approach to the interview.

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## Source:

Mie University, Public Relations Office

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