

Poster presentation

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Premorbid development in twins with schizophrenia

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Background

Premorbid developmental abnormalities have often been reported in patients with schizophrenia but it is not clear whether these are genetic or environmental in origin.

Materials and methods

Twin pairs ($n=77$) varying in their concordance and zygosity for schizophrenia were assessed for premorbid adjustment and personality. We used bivariate genetic model fitting techniques to quantify the genetic relationship between schizophrenia and developmental abnormalities and to estimate the heritability of these traits

Results

Premorbid deficits in adjustment and personality were associated with schizophrenia. Heritability estimates were greatest for adolescent developmental abnormalities and schizotypal personality traits, while significant genetic and phenotypic correlations for each were detected with schizophrenia.

Conclusions

Premorbid abnormalities of adjustment and personality are detectable in those who will later develop schizophrenia. These deficits reflect the shared influence of the genetic risk for schizophrenia, and could consequently act as endophenotype markers for the disorder.

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