



# Autism BrainNet

Advancing research through the gift of brain donation

September 10, 2021

## Message from David G. Amaral, Scientific Director of Autism BrainNet



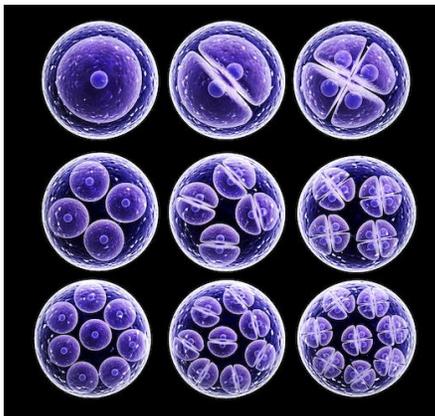
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A founding principle of Autism BrainNet is that research using postmortem brain tissue can help understand the biological causes of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and related neurodevelopmental conditions and identify targets for developing new and effective treatments.

We have seen this before with diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. Virtually all of the current and experimental treatments for these conditions are based on research on human brain tissue. [Read more](#)

### SCIENCE

## Somatic mutations in the human brain may play a role in autism risk



In the largest study of its kind to date, researchers examined the type and frequency of somatic mutations in the brain of donors with and without autism.

Findings from this study suggest that somatic mutations within certain regions of brain DNA may contribute to autism risk.

[Read more about the study](#)

**Study of postmortem brain demonstrates neuronal**

## cell loss in the prefrontal cortex in autism



Brain communication occurs through electrical impulses that reflect the excitation and inhibition of neurons. A new study of the postmortem brain showed that people with autism may have fewer inhibitory neurons in the prefrontal region of the brain. This loss of cells may affect the balance of neuronal excitation and inhibition that regulates the activity of brain circuits.

[Read more about the study.](#)

## MEET OUR TEAM

### A conversation with Carol A. Tamminga, director of Autism BrainNet Dallas node

We recently spoke with the director of Autism BrainNet Dallas node Carol A. Tamminga, M.D., to learn more about her role and experience working for Autism BrainNet.

[Read the interview](#)



## NEWS

### 2021 Autism BrainNet Appreciation Award: recipients announced

Autism BrainNet announces the recipients of the 2021 Autism BrainNet Appreciation Award, a new initiative that recognizes outstanding partners and collaborators for their dedication to advancing brain tissue research in autism and related neurodevelopmental conditions.

On behalf of the entire team at Autism BrainNet, thank you and congratulations to this year's recipients!

[Read more](#)



## DONOR RESOURCES



While pre-registration is not required to become a brain donor for Autism BrainNet, long-term planning will help ensure that a donor's decision is respected.

We have developed resources to help you and your family plan and communicate your intent to become a brain donor for Autism BrainNet. We hope you find these resources helpful.

[Learn more](#)

## HOTLINE

### Contact us, we are here to help.

If you have questions about making a donation or the donation process, call our 24 hour hotline:

**1-877-333-0999**

If you have questions about Autism BrainNet, email us at:

[info@autismbrainnet.org](mailto:info@autismbrainnet.org)

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Autism BrainNet | 160 5th Avenue, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10010

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