NEWS

Family sequencing study boosts two-hit model of autism
A new analysis of children with autism and their unaffected parents provides the best evidence to date that mutations in multiple genes may work together to cause autism and related disorders.

Scientists probe puzzling overlap of epilepsy and autism
Large studies on the epidemiology and genetics of epilepsy and autism have
uncovered commonalities between the two disorders. But scientists are only beginning to untangle the biological roots of the overlap.

Study finds high rate of autism in South Korea

The first comprehensive autism study in South Korea has found that the prevalence of the disorder is more than double the number in the United States.

CONFERENCE REPORT: IMFAR 2011

Brain overgrowth may drive early symptoms of autism

Long bundles of neurons that connect key regions in the brain develop abnormally in the first year of life in children with autism, according to new findings presented Friday at the International Meeting for Autism Research in San Diego.

Language gene mouse model could help test autism drugs

Mice lacking CNTNAP2, a gene linked to autism and language impairment, show behaviors and brain abnormalities that reflect those seen in people with disorder, according to new findings presented Thursday at the International Meeting for Autism Research in San Diego.

Budget cuts hit autism research

Cuts to the National Institutes of Health budget affect both investigators who
have existing grants — which will receive one percent less than in 2010 — and those applying for funding.

**Despite reasoning skills, Asperger boys struggle to focus**

Teenage boys with Asperger syndrome with higher-than-average scores on tests of abstract reasoning fare worse than controls on short-term memory and ability to filter out distractions.

**IN BRIEF**

**Genetics: Metabolism gene trio linked to autism**

Variants of three genes involved in a metabolic pathway together raise the risk of autism, according to a study published 5 March in the *Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*.

**Clinical research: Studies add to confusion over gut-autism link**

People who have severe gastrointestinal problems during childhood are no more likely to be on the autism spectrum than are healthy controls, a study reported 21 March in *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*.

**TOOLBOX**
Brain photos reveal multiple responses to single scene

The brain collects information on an object’s orientation, direction and speed all at the same time, according to a study published 15 April in *NeuroImage*.

BLOG

Sibling empathy

Children with autism who have older siblings score lower on tests that assess their understanding of the thoughts, feelings and intentions of others, compared with those who don't have older siblings.

Documentary review: 'Wretches and Jabberers'

A new documentary blasts misperceptions about nonverbal people with autism, showing that they are capable of intelligence, wit and empathy even as their disorder chains them "like a beast."