



Autism BrainNet

Advancing research through the gift of brain donation

July 17, 2025

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



While autism is typically thought of as a childhood disorder, for many autistic individuals, symptoms persist throughout life. Recently, several papers have reported that autism is associated with an increased likelihood of presenile dementia, senile dementia and Parkinson's disease.

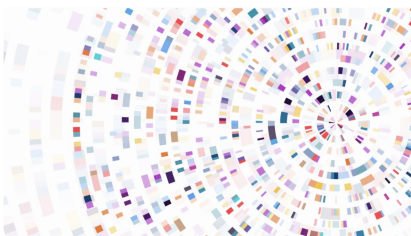
An important first step to getting a clearer understanding will be examining the brains of autistics for the telltale signs of dementia or

Parkinson's disease to determine if they are similar or different from nonautistic individuals.

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Research Update

Autism BrainNet Releases Genetic Data for 27 New Brain Samples



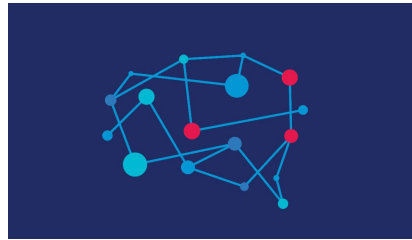
The generosity of our donors and their families is what makes it possible for Autism BrainNet to generate data and resources for scientists to further research into the biological causes of autism and related neurodevelopmental disorders.

The data release brings the total number of brain samples with available genetic data to 273.

[Read About the Data](#)

Increased Microglial Function in the Brain and Alzheimer's Disease: The Importance of Postmortem Brain Donations

The findings from this study are an excellent example of how essential postmortem brain donations are to advance our knowledge of how the brain functions, the mechanisms and molecular changes that lead to Alzheimer's disease, in this case, and other neurodevelopmental disorders, such as autism.



[Read More](#)

Autism BrainNet in the News

Explore the following recent articles and podcast interviews to learn more about Autism BrainNet and how the gift of brain donation contributes to autism science.



Causes or Cures Podcast

What's Causing the Boom in Autism & the Role of Brain Donations, with Dr. David Amaral and Kathy Stein

[Listen to the Interview](#)

Embracing Autism Podcast

Embracing Autism IRL: A Legacy Of Hope:
How Brain Donation Could Spark Change with
Dr. David Amaral

[Watch the Episode](#)



Why Brain Donation is Key to Unlocking the Mysteries of Autism

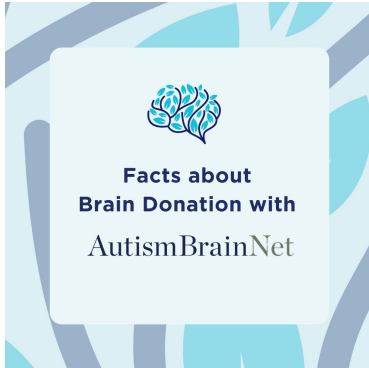
This Healthcare Business Today article explores the impact of brain donation in gaining a deeper understanding of autism and the molecular and cellular changes in the brain.

[Read the Article](#)



Planning for Donation

10 Facts about Brain Donation with Autism BrainNet



The decision to become a brain donor is a personal one, and we encourage you to learn about the donation process in advance and to discuss it with your loved ones. Long-term planning can help minimize the stress associated with decision-making at the time of death.

The following 10 facts about brain donation with Autism BrainNet provide an overview of the program and process to help you determine if postmortem brain donation is right for you and your family.

[Get the Facts](#)

Community Events

Thanks for Visiting Us!

Autism BrainNet joined families and providers at multiple community events nationwide, including the Annual Meeting for the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations, Autism Speaks Walk/Empower Events, Council for Autism Service Providers Conference, Prader-Willi Syndrome Association|USA United in Hope Conference, among others.

We are honored to be part of these events and grateful to everyone who stopped by the Autism BrainNet booth to say hello and learn more about our mission.



CeCe McBride and Lilliam Acosta-Sanchez at the Annual Meeting for the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations (AOPO) in Denver, CO



Alycia Halladay, Ph.D., at the Prader-Willi Syndrome Association|USA United in Hope Conference in Phoenix, AZ

[Learn More](#)

Helpline

Contact us, we are here to help.

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

1-877-333-0999

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

info@autismbrainnet.org

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