

Study: Fever may ease autism for a while

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Anecdotes about fevers triggering "normal" behavior in autistic children now have a scientific study to back them, researchers in Baltimore report.

Dr. Andrew W. Zimmerman, a pediatric neurologist, and colleagues found fever-induced improvements, although fleeting, did occur in more than 80 percent of the 30 autistic children they studied, the Baltimore Sun reported Monday.

The scientists said they didn't know what sparked the changes or why they occurred in some children and not others. But they said the observations provide new insight into what is occurring in an autistic child's brain and how it may be treated one day.

"If we could understand what's going on with this, we might be able to understand autism better and be in a better position to treat it," said Zimmerman, director of medical research at Kennedy Krieger's Center for Autism and Related Disorders.

The findings were published in the December issue of *Pediatrics*.

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