Experts find epigenetic changes moderate reality distortion in schizophrenia patients

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A study in *Schizophrenia Bulletin* is among the first to indicate epigenetic changes related to immune function in schizophrenia. DNA methylation, a process involving the addition of a methyl group to the DNA without changing its sequence, can alter gene expression.

Led by Dr. Jingyu Liu, the nine researchers analyzed and verified changes in DNA methylation patterns in people with and without schizophrenia and found significant changes in seven genes that moderate immune responses.

In the current study, the researchers found that the seven genes that were up or down regulated protect against the delusion and hallucination symptoms in schizophrenia patients. This finding suggests that methylation changes related to immune function may be one of the pathways to moderate symptoms in schizophrenia patients.

More information: The paper "Methylation Patterns in Whole Blood Correlate With Symptoms in Schizophrenia Patients" can be accessed here: www.oxfordjournals.org/page/5147/6

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