

Unlocking the Secrets of Autism: Environmental and Genetic Influences Revealed

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition characterized by challenges in social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors. While the exact causes of ASD remain elusive, research has consistently pointed to a combination of environmental and genetic factors playing a significant role in its development.



The Environmental and Genetic Causes of Autism

by James Lyons-Weiler

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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Environmental Influences

Exposure to certain environmental factors during pregnancy or early childhood has been linked to an increased risk of ASD. These include:

- **Parental age:** Advanced maternal or paternal age has been associated with a higher likelihood of having a child with ASD.

- **Prenatal infections:** Maternal infections during pregnancy, such as rubella or cytomegalovirus, have been found to increase the risk of ASD.
- **Air pollution:** Exposure to air pollutants, particularly polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), has been linked to an increased risk of ASD.
- **Pesticides and herbicides:** Exposure to certain pesticides and herbicides, such as organophosphates and glyphosate, has been associated with an increased risk of ASD.
- **Prenatal stress:** Maternal stress during pregnancy has been linked to an increased risk of ASD.

Genetic Influences

Genetic factors play a significant role in the development of ASD. Studies have identified several genes that are associated with an increased risk of the condition. These genes are involved in various biological processes, including:

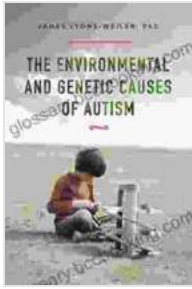
- **Synaptic function:** Genes involved in synaptic function, which is the communication between neurons, have been linked to ASD.
- **Immune function:** Genes involved in immune function have been associated with an increased risk of ASD.
- **Metabo**

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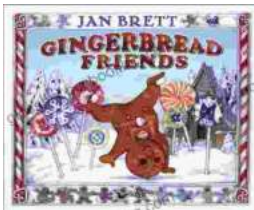
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