Gene Causes Many Asthma Cases

BBC News Health Section reported this on July 10 2002 : Gene Causes Many Asthma Cases. Its opening sentence stated that, ““Scientists have pinpointed a gene which has been found to be a major cause of asthma in a significant proportion of cases.” The break down of statements made in the article is as follows:

**Abstract (What was the goal of the study?)**

“Scientists have pinpointed a gene which has been found to be a major cause of asthma in a significant proportion of cases.”

**Introduction (How is this study placed in context?)**

“The condition is caused by an allergic reaction leading to inflammation of the tissues of the lungs. This in turn causes the airways to contract to readily, leading to coughing, wheezing and breathlessness.”

“At present the only way to treat the condition is to use drugs to suppress the inflammation or to dilate the constricted airways.

“[asthma] is thought to be linked to factors such as cold air and exercise as well as exposure to substances that provoke the allergic reaction”

“Air pollution…and changes in diet have also been linked to the condition”

(Cause and treatments of asthma reported)

**Methods (How the study was conducted?)**

**“**A comprehensive analysis of the gens of 460 pairs of brothers and sisters”

**Results (What led them to their conclusions?)**

None

**Discussion (What implications does this have?)**

“The new discovery could lead to new treatments to prevent asthma from developing even if there are signs of an allergic reaction in the lungs. “

“Could also allow for childhood screening”

**Quotes**

“We’re very excited about this discovery” -Prof. Stephen Holgate

“Our research could lead to entirely new ways of diagnosing and treating asthma.” –Prof. Stephen Holgate

“This hold great promise for benefiting the huge numbers of people who suffer from this condition, one of the most prevalent chronic illnesses in children today.” –Prof. Stephen Holgate

“[the study was a] very exciting step forward in unraveling the genetics of asthma”-Donna Covey (CE of UK National Asthma Campaign)

“The discovery will help us to understand why asthma might develop in the first place and its findings will enable the scientific community to push forward with further research.” ”-Donna Covey (CE of UK National Asthma Campaign)

**Information density:** Very Mild

**Audience**: Common Reader

**What does the title suggest**: Many asthma cases are caused by a single gene

**Subject Matter Breakdown**

**Heavy:** Quotes, causes of asthma, implications of study

**Medium:** Treatments for asthma

**Light:** Methods for the study

**None:** Data from the study