

# Genetic Lifehacks

Learn. Experiment. Optimize.

Hi everyone,

People often accuse me of thinking that everything is genetic... And they are right, to some extent. Of course, most health conditions are not caused by a single mutation, nor solely genetic. Instead, multiple small genetic changes interact with lifestyle and environment.

But I'm often surprised by things that I never thought would have a genetic component (like [gingivitis](#) or [teeth grinding](#)).

This week's new article is on essential tremor – a topic requested by a member. It was a subject that I didn't know much about before reading through the research.

Genetic research on a topic like essential tremor (ET) really opens doors to understanding the mechanism that causes the condition. ET affects about 2% of the population, but doctors didn't really know what caused it. Genome-wide association studies over the past decade have shown researchers the 'why' -- highlighting which biological pathways in the brain are altered.

Thanks for being a member!

Debbie

Thank you for supporting Genetic Lifehacks through your membership! If you ever have a problem with your membership, please don't hesitate to email me at [debbie@geneticlifehacks.com](mailto:debbie@geneticlifehacks.com).

**Coming soon...** I'm working on several new membership features, such as better summary reports and topic-specific courses. My goal is to always keep increasing the value you receive from your membership.



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## Essential Tremor: Causes and Possible Solutions

Essential tremor (ET) is a neurological disease that causes a hand or arm to shake during activities such as writing or eating. The tremor can also progress to involve the neck, voice, jaw, or other body regions.

This article explores the recent research on the neurological and genetic causes of ET.

### What is an Essential Tremor?

The first noticeable symptom often with essential tremor is that writing or fine hand movements, such as when texting, are difficult due to shaking. For others, it may be first noticed when eating or pouring a drink into a glass. Essential tremor usually starts in the hand and arm, but sometimes it is first seen as an involuntary head movement or voice tremor.

While this article explains the neurological causes of essential tremors, keep in mind that for people with ET there are often huge emotional impacts from the disease. It causes anxiety, frustration, and decreased self-esteem for many, especially when it starts at a young age.

[Read the full article](#)



Recently updated article:

## **GABA levels: Genetic variants that impact this inhibitory neurotransmitter**

GABA (gamma-Aminobutyric acid) is a neurotransmitter that acts to block or inhibit a neuron from firing. It is an essential way that the brain regulates impulses, and low GABA levels are linked with several conditions including anxiety and PTSD.

This article explains the role of GABA in the brain – including how the neurons make GABA and the regulation of the amount of GABA inhibition. We will dive into the genetic variants that can alter your GABA levels and then finish with natural ways to increase GABA.

**Read the full article**

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### **What I've Been Reading...**

1) [China's gene giant harvests data from millions of women \(Reuters\)](#)

This 2021 article explains how a Chinese company, BGI, re-analyzes blood samples from NIFTY prenatal tests, which are offered by obstetricians worldwide.

From the article: "One BGI study, for instance, used a military supercomputer to re-analyze NIFTY data and map the prevalence of viruses in Chinese women, look for indicators of mental illness in them, and single out Tibetan and Uyghur minorities to find links between their genes and their characteristics."

The article is eye-opening for a couple reasons: First, blood and lab samples are often reused for research without your knowledge. This includes researchers in the US going back and doing [DNA research](#) using newborn bloodspot screening cards. Second, BGI is now partnered with [Nebula Genomics](#), a popular option in the US for whole genome tests.

## 2) [The Brain of an Entrepreneur](#) (*NeoLife*)

Entrepreneurs tend to think and act a little differently. This NeoLife article covers the neurodivergence, stress resilience, and increased suicide risk seen in entrepreneurs.

You may also be interested in the new research study published in PNAS on [genetic variants found in leaders](#).

## 3) [A biologist explains the science of murmurations](#) (*The Conversation*)

OK, so this article is written for kids, but I found the explanation of murmurations engaging and interesting.

Let me leave you this week with a murmuration video compilation



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### Genetic Lifehacks

Spring is coming this week, MT

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