



How Does A Family History Of Autism Affect The Risk Of My Child Developing An Autism Spectrum Disorder?

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Question: How does a family history of autism affect the risk of my child developing an autism spectrum disorder?

Answer: A family history of [autism](#) does slightly increase the risk of having another child with autism. This is greatest when a couple has a child with autism and they're considering having further children. [Baby boys are at much greater risk than girls](#) for reasons that we don't fully understand. While the risk of having a child with autism is increased significantly over the general population if there's already one child with autism, it is still far more likely that a subsequent child will not have autism than that they will have autism.

The great majority of families affected by autism have only a single affected child. The risks are lower if there's a more distant relative, such as a cousin or uncle affected with autism.

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