



For 20 years, scientists at an American university studied autism.

The study involved more than 115,000 children, and scientists wanted to learn the causes of autism and ways to **prevent** it. Scientists took blood samples, they did **genetic** tests, and all people in the study answered many questions about their health.

The study found that three important things impacted autism. They were genetics, health, and the time that events happened. The study also showed that the second **trimester** of the pregnancy was very important, as the child's brain developed in this time. When a pregnant woman had a high fever in the second trimester, and she didn't treat the fever, it could cause autism.

Reports say that one in 44 children in the US has autism.

Difficult words: **prevent** (to stop something from happening), **genetic** (information in the body) **trimester** (three months).

Discussion Questions

Topic Talk

1. Define the following words: *prevent*, *genetic* and *trimester*
2. What did scientists at an American university want to know about autism?
3. How did the scientists carry out the study?
4. According to the study, what were the three important things that impacted autism?
5. Why is the second trimester of the pregnancy very important?
6. What could happen to the baby if a pregnant woman had a high fever and didn't treat it?
7. Based on reports, how many children in the US have autism?

Express Your Thoughts

1. How many children in your country have autism?
2. How are autistic people treated in your country?
3. Do you think that the overall awareness level of autism in your country is high or low?
4. Are the rights of individuals with autism well-protected in your country?