

Psychotic symptoms in 16p11.2 copy number variant carriers

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Abstract: 16p11.2 copy number variation (CNV) is implicated in neurodevelopmental disorders, with the duplication and deletion associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the duplication associated with schizophrenia (SCZ). The 16p11.2 CNV may therefore provide insight into the relationship between ASD and SCZ, distinct disorders that co-occur at an elevated rate and are difficult to distinguish from each other and from common co-occurring diagnoses such as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), itself a potential risk factor for SCZ. As psychotic symptoms are core to SCZ but distinct from ASD, we sought to examine their predictors in a population (n = 546) of 16p11.2 CNV carriers and their noncarrier siblings recruited by the Simons Variation in Individuals Project. We hypothesized that psychotic symptoms would be most common in duplication carriers followed by deletion carriers and noncarriers, that an ASD diagnosis would predict psychotic symptoms among CNV carriers, and that OCD symptoms would predict psychotic symptoms among all participants. Using data collected across multiple measures, we identified 19 participants with psychotic symptoms. Logistic regression models adjusting for biological sex, age, and IQ found that 16p11.2 duplication and ASD diagnosis predicted psychotic symptom presence. Our findings suggest that the association between 16p11.2 duplication and psychotic symptoms is independent of ASD diagnosis and that ASD diagnosis and psychotic symptoms may be associated in 16p11.2 CNV carriers.

Lay Summary: Either deletion or duplication at chromosome 16p11.2 raises the risk of autism spectrum disorder, and duplication, but not deletion, has been reported in schizophrenia. In a sample of 16p11.2 deletion and duplication carriers, we found that having the duplication or having an autism diagnosis may increase the risk of psychosis, a key feature of schizophrenia.

Keywords: Chromosomes, Human, Pair 16; Chromosome Deletion; Chromosome Duplication; Autism Spectrum Disorder; Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders; Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder; Phenotype.

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1 Introduction

Copy number variation (CNV) is a type of structural genetic variation involving the deletion or duplication of a DNA segment. CNVs are common, often benign, and represent an important mechanism by which humans maintain genetic diversity (Zarrei, MacDonald, Merico, & Scherer, 2015). However, certain specific CNVs are associated with pathology, including neuropsychiatric conditions (Cook Jr & Scherer, 2008). One such CNV is the BP4-BP5 16p11.2 copy number variant (CNV), which involves approximately 600 kilobases and 29 genes (Simons VIP Consortium, 2012). Though rare in the general population, it is overrepresented in those with developmental delay or psychiatric illness. In particular, both the 16p11.2 deletion and duplication are associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) (Weiss et al., 2008), and 16p11.2 duplication is associated with schizophrenia (SCZ) (Kushima et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2009). ASD prevalence is thought to be similar in both groups, with SCZ symptoms more common in duplication than deletion carriers (Niarchou et al., 2019).

The 16p11.2 CNV may provide insight into the complex relationship between symptoms of ASD and symptoms of SCZ, which, while considered distinct psychiatric disorders, converge at the levels of diagnosis, neurodevelopment and epidemiology.

At a diagnostic level, ASD and SCZ share features. In ASD, impaired social-emotional reciprocity is a requirement for the diagnosis (Lord, Elsabbagh, Baird, & Veenstra-VanderWeele, 2018). In SCZ, psychosis is the disorder's hallmark, and can be defined as a gross impairment in the ability to distinguish between inner experience and external reality (Lieberman & First, 2018). "Psychotic symptoms," which include delusional beliefs and perceptual disturbances, reflect this impairment, and are quite distinct from ASD. However, another core SCZ feature, the so-called "negative symptoms," include diminished emotional expression and asociality, and share many features with ASD's social impairment (Hommer & Swedo, 2015).

The nosology of ASD and SCZ in fact has a long and complicated history (J. Rapoport, Chavez, Greenstein, Addington, & Gogtay, 2009; Wolff, 2004).

In 1910, Bleuler originally coined the term "autism" to describe the "withdrawal of the patient to his fantasies" in schizophrenia (Kuhn & Cahn, 2004). Subsequently, Kanner (1943) used the same word to describe the "extreme aloneness from the very beginning of life" in a group of children who, he surmised, had a syndrome that was separate from but related to

31 schizophrenia. For decades thereafter, Kanner's syndrome, variously called "infantile autism"
32 and "infantile psychosis," was considered one of "the childhood schizophrenias." By the early
33 1970s, however, mounting evidence suggested that autism and schizophrenia were distinct dis-
34 orders (Kolvin, 1971; Rutter, 1972 Oct-Dec). In 1980, this distinction was formally codified
35 (American Psychiatric Association, 1980).

36 It has, however, long been recognized that subtle symptoms, such as delay and abnormality
37 in language, often precede the emergence of frank psychotic behavior (Courvoisier, Labellarte,
38 & Riddle, 2001; Millan et al., 2016), and SCZ increasingly has been considered a disorder
39 of abnormal neurodevelopment (Insel, 2010; Owen, O'Donovan, Thapar, & Craddock, 2011;
40 J. L. Rapoport, Giedd, & Gogtay, 2012). A recent meta-analysis showed that ASD and SCZ
41 co-occur more frequently than chance would suggest, with SCZ over three times as common in
42 individuals with ASD as in controls (Zheng, Zheng, & Zou, 2018).

43 If those with ASD are at elevated risk of SCZ, then recognizing psychotic symptoms in this
44 population is of particular importance. Unlike ASD, which tends to be stable into adulthood
45 (Lord et al., 2018), SCZ is characterized by a progressive deterioration in functioning that early
46 detection and treatment may mitigate (Lieberman & First, 2018).

47 Yet the communication impairment and repetitive speech or behavior associated with ASD
48 can make assessment and differentiation of delusional beliefs and perceptual disturbances diffi-
49 cult. Further, repetitive behaviors in ASD are sometimes difficult to distinguish from symptoms
50 of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), which is itself a common co-occurring diagnosis that
51 shares genetic liability with SCZ and, by extension, ASD (Consortium et al., 2018). Although
52 OCD symptoms and characteristic repetitive behaviors in ASD are thought to be phenomeno-
53 logically distinct (Guo et al., 2017; Jiujiias, Kelley, & Hall, 2017), the boundary between them
54 is not always clear. Obsessive compulsive symptoms may also be important in the context
55 of recognizing psychosis. Obsessive compulsive symptoms are present in about 30% of people
56 with SCZ (Swets et al., 2014), and recent evidence has suggested that they may represent a
57 SCZ risk factor (Barzilay et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2014; Van Dael et al., 2011).

58 We sought to examine predictors of psychotic symptoms in 16p11.2 CNV carriers. By
59 doing so, we hoped to yield insights relevant to psychosis in the broader ASD population,
60 improving the understanding of ASD, SCZ, and the relationship these disorders have with

61 each other and with OCD. We hypothesized that: 1) psychotic symptoms are most common
62 in 16p11.2 duplication carriers followed by 16p11.2 deletion carriers and noncarriers, 2) the
63 presence of an ASD diagnosis predicts an increased risk of having psychotic symptoms among
64 CNV carriers, and 3) OCD symptoms will predict psychotic symptoms among both CNV
65 carriers and noncarriers.

66 2 Method

67 2.1 Study Sample

68 Probands with the 16p11.2 CNV were identified by routine clinical testing and were recruited
69 by the Simons Variation in Individuals Project (VIP) (Simons VIP Consortium, 2012), a large
70 study of specific recurrent genetic variants that contribute to the risk of ASD and other neurode-
71 velopmental disorders. Probands were recruited from across the United States and Canada.
72 Recruitment strategies included targeted online advertising via Google and Facebook; links
73 from patient advocacy websites; direct mailings to clinicians (such as genetic counselors, child
74 neurologists and developmental pediatricians); and collaborations with cytogenetics laborato-
75 ries. Once a proband was confirmed to have the CNV, their biological relatives had cascade
76 genetic testing to identify additional carriers. Carriers were defined as participants with the
77 canonical 600kb BP4-BP5 16p11.2 duplication or deletion (chromosome 16 position 29,652,999-
78 30,199,351 in hg19). Individuals with any additional mutations known to be associated with
79 neurodevelopmental abnormalities (including chromosomal disorders such as fragile X, other
80 known pathogenic CNVs such as 15q11.2, or monogenic disorders such as tuberous sclerosis)
81 were excluded. This method produced the complete Simons VIP cohort of 658 participants:
82 127 16p11.2 duplication (54 initially identified probands, 73 identified through cascade testing),
83 137 16p11.2 deletion (115 initially identified probands, 22 identified through cascade testing),
84 and 394 noncarrier relatives. Our study included all cohort members who were evaluated for
85 ASD and completed an IQ assessment. 546 participants met these criteria: 109 with 16p11.2
86 duplication (52 initially identified probands, 57 identified through cascade testing), 131 with
87 16p11.2 deletion (111 initially identified probands, 20 identified through cascade testing), and
88 306 noncarriers.

89 Within the study sample, we compared several baseline characteristics of 16p11.2 dupli-
90 cation, 16p11.2 deletion, and noncarrier participants. Mean age and IQ were compared using
91 analysis of variance (ANOVA), with Tukey’s procedure used for post-hoc pairwise comparisons.
92 Biological sex, ASD diagnosis, and OCD symptoms were compared using χ^2 , with Bonferroni-
93 adjusted χ^2 for post-hoc comparisons (**Table 1**).

94 **2.2 Assessment Measures**

95 Participants traveled to one of three phenotyping sites: Baylor College of Medicine (Houston,
96 TX), Boston Children’s Hospital (Boston, MA) or University of Washington, Seattle (Seattle,
97 WA). Travel expenses were paid to limit financial barriers. Participants underwent a standard-
98 ized assessment performed by trained clinicians that encompassed self-report, parent-report,
99 interview, and observation measures, with the measures a particular participant received vary-
100 ing based on age and carrier status (**Table 2**).

101 ASD diagnoses were made based on clinical judgment informed by the results of clinician-
102 administered and self- or caregiver-report measures. The Autism Diagnostic Observation Scale,
103 Second Edition (ADOS-2) (Lord et al., 2012), a clinician-administered observational measure,
104 was administered to all participants except noncarrier parents of carrier children or participants
105 in whom the measure’s use was not feasible due to limitations of cognition or mobility. An
106 ADOS-2 assessment involves the administration of one of four modules designed for different
107 levels of verbal ability and, in the case of Module 4, age. Raw scores are produced for core
108 domains of social affect (SA) and restricted/repetitive behaviors (RRB), as well as a combined
109 “total” raw score for overall ASD symptomatology. These raw scores can be converted into
110 scaled “Calibrated Severity Scores” (CSS) that range from 1 to 10 and represent a standard-
111 ized quantification of ASD symptom severity (Gotham, Pickles, & Lord, 2009; Hus, Gotham,
112 & Lord, 2014; Hus & Lord, 2014). The Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R) (Rutter,
113 Le Couteur, & Lord, 2003), an interview with the participant’s parent or caregiver, was ad-
114 ministered to all participants in whom ASD was suspected. Self- or caregiver-report measures
115 were also used to inform the clinical ASD diagnosis, including the Broad Autism Phenotype
116 Questionnaire (BAPQ) (Hurley, Losh, Parlier, Reznick, & Piven, 2007), Social Communica-
117 tion Questionnaire (SCQ) (Rutter, Bailey, & Lord, 2003) and Social Responsiveness Scale

118 (SRS)/Social Responsiveness Scale-Adult Research Version (SRS-ARV) (Constantino, 2005;
119 Constantino & Todd, 2005).

120 IQ was measured with the Differential Ability Scales, Second Edition (DAS-II) (Elliot,
121 2007) and Mullen Scales of Early Learning (MSEL) (Shank, 2011) in children and the Wechsler
122 Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI) (Wechsler, 1999) in adults. Adaptive skills were
123 assessed using the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales II (Sparrow, Cicchetti, & Balla, 2005).

124 Psychiatric symptoms were assessed using the school-age Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL),
125 Adult Behavior Checklist (ABCL), Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R), DISC (Diag-
126 nostic Interview Schedule for Children), and M-SOPS (Modified Scale of Prodromal Symp-
127 toms). The CBCL is part of the Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA),
128 and consists of 113 questions about mental health with eight underlying factors (Achenbach
129 & Rescorla, 2001). It is normed for six to eighteen-year-olds and completed by a parent or
130 caregiver. The ABCL is an analogous ASEBA scale for adults, normed for ages eighteen to
131 59 and completed by an adult who knows the participant well (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2003).
132 The SCL-90-R is a 90-item Likert-type self-report measure of psychiatric symptoms in adults,
133 with nine underlying factors (Derogatis, 1994). The DISC is a structured diagnostic interview
134 designed to assess for symptoms of DSM-IV psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents
135 (Shaffer, Fisher, Lucas, Dulcan, & Schwab-Stone, 2000). The M-SOPS is a nineteen-item
136 clinician-rated instrument that measures symptoms of psychosis (McGlashan, Miller, Woods,
137 Hoffman, & Davidson, 2001).

138 **2.3 Analytic Approach**

139 **2.3.1 Development of a Psychotic Symptom Index**

140 A psychosis-specific measure, the M-SOPS, was only administered to 26 participants. We
141 therefore derived a composite index of psychotic symptoms by combining M-SOPS responses
142 with data collected from the CBCL/ABCL, SCL-90-R, and DISC, which all include questions
143 assessing for psychotic symptoms (**Table S1**). 463 (84.80%) participants received at least one
144 of these four measures, and 276 (50.55%) received two or more.

145 For each measure, we derived a binary variable indicating a screen-positive or negative for
146 presence/absence of psychotic symptoms based on predefined criteria. Then, for each pairwise

147 combination of measures, we examined the extent to which positive screens co-occurred and
148 performed Fisher’s exact test to assess the strength of their relationship.

149 If a subject screened positive by at least two different measures, we considered the composite
150 index to be positive, reflecting the likely presence of psychotic symptoms. To interrogate the
151 robustness of this indicator, we created and compared four versions of the composite index.
152 Version one, which we created first, was the least stringent. Version two used an age cutoff,
153 version three used a stricter CBCL/ABCL threshold, and version four incorporated both.

154 Positive screens by each measure comprising the index were operationalized as follows:

155 **CBCL/ABCL:** The CBCL/ABCL “Thought Problems” factor includes several psychosis-
156 related items. As item-level CBCL/ABCL data were not available, for version one of the
157 index we selected a Thought Problems T-score threshold of ≥ 60 to identify scores at least
158 one standard deviation above the mean, and considered these positive. As the CBCL Thought
159 Problems T-Score can be elevated in nonpsychotic youth with ASD (Biederman et al., 2010;
160 Duarte, Bordin, de Oliveira, & Bird, 2003; Hoffmann, Weber, König, Becker, & Kamp-Becker,
161 2016; Mazefsky, Anderson, Conner, & Minshew, 2011; Ooi, Rescorla, Ang, Woo, & Fung,
162 2011), versions three and four of the index raised the threshold to ≥ 70 (i.e., two rather than
163 one standard deviations above the mean).

164 **SCL-90-R:** We selected four items reflecting specific psychotic symptoms distinct from
165 ASD from the SCL-90-R “psychoticism” factor: “the idea that someone else can control your
166 thoughts,” “hearing voices that other people do not hear,” “other people being aware of your
167 private thoughts,” and “having thoughts that are not your own.” We considered a response of
168 at least “a little bit” to any of these items to be a positive screen.

169 **DISC:** For each DSM-IV diagnosis assessed by the DISC interview, data were available
170 regarding the number of symptoms endorsed but not which were endorsed specifically. We
171 considered endorsement of at least one schizophrenia symptom within the past year to represent
172 a positive screen.

173 **M-SOPS:** Five M-SOPS items assess symptoms of psychosis: “unusual thought content
174 or delusional ideas,” “suspiciousness or persecutory ideas,” “grandiosity,” “perceptual abnor-
175 malities or hallucinations,” and “disorganized communication.” The presence of at least one
176 of these symptoms (with the exception of “disorganized communication,” which we did not

177 consider given its non-specificity) represented a positive screen.

178 Versions one and three of the index did not incorporate an age cutoff. However, since true
179 psychosis in young children is rare, with childhood-onset schizophrenia typically not present-
180 ing before age seven (Baribeau & Anagnostou, 2013), versions two and four required that a
181 participant be at least seven years old to be positively identified with psychotic symptoms.

182 **2.3.2 Primary Analysis**

183 As index version four was the most stringent, incorporating both the raised CBCL threshold
184 and the age cutoff, we used it to identify participants likely to have psychotic symptoms. We
185 then examined predictors of the presence of psychotic symptoms by conducting a series of
186 logistic regressions. All models used generalized estimating equations (GEEs) to control for
187 intra-family correlations (Hanley, Negassa, deB Edwardes, & Forrester, 2003).

188 Our predictor variables of interest, which we selected *a priori*, were CNV carrier status, age,
189 IQ, clinical ASD diagnosis, OCD symptoms (as measured by endorsement of at least one OCD
190 symptom in the past year during the DISC interview) and biological sex. Prior to conducting
191 any analyses, we ruled out multicollinearity by inspecting the correlation matrix between scaled
192 versions of all variables.

193 Our primary analysis included four regression models. The first was estimated for the
194 entire sample, and included all predictors of interest. The second, third and fourth models
195 were estimated for subgroups of the sample defined by carrier status (i.e., 16p11.2 deletion
196 carriers, 16p11.2 duplication carriers, and noncarriers), and each included all predictors of
197 interest except carrier status. All analyses used unscaled variables for ease of interpretability.

198 **2.3.3 Exploratory Regression Analyses**

199 To determine whether ASD severity could predict the presence of psychotic symptoms, we esti-
200 mated exploratory regression models that substituted the categorical ASD diagnosis predictor
201 with continuous ADOS CSS values.

202 Total CSS values for participants who received ADOS Modules 1, 2 or 3 were available to
203 us as part of the Simons VIP dataset. For those who received ADOS Module 4, we derived
204 total CSS values from item-level data (Hus & Lord, 2014). For all ADOS modules, we derived

205 SA and RRB domain CSS values from item-level data where available (Hus et al., 2014). In
206 exploratory models for which total CSS was a predictor, we excluded participants who did not
207 receive the ADOS, yielding a reduced sample (total $n = 315$, with 97 duplication carriers, 121
208 deletion carriers, and 97 noncarriers). In exploratory models for which domain CSS values
209 were predictors, we excluded participants who lacked item-level data, and whose domain scores
210 therefore could not be derived. This reduced the sample further (total $n = 249$, with 68
211 duplication carriers, 97 deletion carriers, and 82 noncarriers).

212 **2.3.4 Software and Data**

213 We conducted all analyses in R 3.5.1 (R Core Team, 2018), using functions from dplyr 0.7.8
214 (Wickham, François, Henry, & Müller, 2018), magrittr 1.5 (Wickham & Bache, 2014), and purrr
215 0.2.5 (Henry & Wickham, 2019), as well as *chisq.post.hoc* from fifer 1.1 (Fife, 2014, March 28/
216 2019), *rescale* from arm 1.10-1 (Gelman et al., 2018), *geeglm* from geepack 1.2-1 (Hojsgaard,
217 Halekoh, & Yan, 2016), and *tidy* from broom 0.5.0 (Robinson et al., 2018). Analysis scripts are
218 available from the authors at <https://github.com/amandeepjutla/2019-16p11-psychosis>. The
219 Simons VIP 16p11.2 v10.0 dataset used for this study can be requested through the Simons
220 Foundation Autism Research Initiative (SFARI, RRID:SC_004261) online portal, SFARI Base,
221 at <https://base.sfari.org>.

222 **3 Results**

223 **3.1 Sample Characteristics**

224 The sample represented a broad range of ages ($M = 23.06$, $SD = 16.95$ years), with signifi-
225 cant variation in age among 16p11.2 duplication, 16p11.2 deletion, and noncarriers, $F(2, 543) =$
226 71.67 , $p < 2.39 \times 10^{-28}$, and post-hoc comparisons showed significant differences for duplication-
227 deletion, noncarrier-duplication, and noncarrier-deletion pairwise comparisons. IQ ($M =$
228 97.69 , $SD = 20.34$) also varied significantly among the three groups, $F(2, 543) = 166.04$, $p <$
229 4.38×10^{-57} , with post-hoc comparisons showing that duplication and deletion group IQ scores
230 differed from the noncarrier group, but not from each other.

231 The three groups were not significantly imbalanced in terms of biological sex composition,

232 $\chi^2(1) = 4.57, p = 0.10$. They differed in terms of ASD diagnosis, $\chi^2(1) = 50.49, p = 1.08 \times 10^{-11}$
233 and presence of OCD symptoms, $\chi^2(1) = 24.29, p = 5.31 \times 10^{-6}$. Post-hoc comparisons for
234 ASD and OCD showed that, as with IQ, duplication and deletion carriers differed significantly
235 from noncarriers but not each other.

236 **3.1.1 Participants with Psychotic Symptoms**

237 56 of 282 participants screened positive on the CBCL or ABCL (using the ≥ 70 T-Score
238 cutoff), 50 of 271 on SCL-90-R, 23 of 178 on DISC, and 9 of 26 on M-SOPS (**Table 3**).
239 We observed some degree of overlap for all possible pairwise combinations of these measures
240 except SCL-90 \times DISC, which was expected because SCL-90 was given only to adults and
241 DISC only to children. Tests of relationship strength between pairs (**Table 4**) identified a
242 statistically significant association between CBCL/ABCL \times DISC (OR 7.71, 95% CI 2.16 -
243 42.21, $p = 2.29 \times 10^{-4}$).

244 Using the most stringent version of the composite index (version four), nineteen partici-
245 pants had likely psychotic symptoms. Of these, nine were female and ten were male. Twelve
246 had 16p11.2 duplication, four had 16p11.2 deletion, and three were noncarrier family members.
247 Seven had a clinical ASD diagnosis, and three had OCD symptoms. Two, both duplication
248 carriers, came from the same family. Most participants who met the “likely psychotic symp-
249 toms” threshold (eleven of the nineteen) did so by a combination of positive screens on the
250 CBCL/ABCL and DISC measures. Of the remainder, three screened positive on CBCL/ABCL
251 and SCL-90-R, three on SCL-90-R and M-SOPS, one on CBCL/ABCL and M-SOPS, and one
252 on DISC and M-SOPS. No participant screened positive on more than two measures.

253 Their mean age was 18.03 years ($SD = 10.93$ years), and mean IQ was 81.95 ($SD = 19.75$).

254 **3.2 Predictors of Psychotic Symptoms**

255 The parameters of regression models estimated for the primary analysis are presented in **Table**
256 **5** (for the entire sample) and **Table 6** (for carrier status-defined subgroups).

257 **3.2.1 Hypothesis 1: CNV Carrier Status as Predictor**

258 Hypothesis 1, that psychotic symptoms would be most common in 16p11.2 duplication carriers
259 followed by 16p11.2 deletion carriers and noncarriers was partially supported by our finding
260 that, in the model estimated for the entire sample, 16p11.2 duplication carrier status predicted
261 psychotic symptom presence (OR 7.44, 95% CI 1.77 - 31.18, $p = 0.006$). Neither deletion
262 carrier status nor noncarrier status was a significant predictor.

263 **3.2.2 Hypothesis 2: ASD Defined by Clinical Diagnosis as Predictor**

264 Hypothesis 2, that ASD diagnosis would predict presence of psychotic symptoms among 16p11.2
265 CNV carriers, was partially supported by our finding that categorical ASD diagnosis predicted
266 psychotic symptom presence in the entire sample (OR 4.21, 95% CI 1.31 - 13.56, $p = 0.02$).
267 An insufficient number of noncarriers had an ASD diagnosis, or co-occurring psychotic symp-
268 toms, to interpret findings against other subgroups. ASD diagnosis did not reach statistical
269 significance as a predictor among either CNV carrier-defined subgroup alone.

270 **3.2.3 Hypothesis 3: OCD Symptoms as Predictor**

271 Hypothesis 3, that OCD symptoms would predict the presence of psychotic symptoms among
272 both carriers and noncarriers, was not significantly supported by our findings.

273 **3.2.4 IQ, Biological Sex and Age as Predictors**

274 IQ and biological sex were not significant predictors of the presence of psychotic symptoms in
275 the entire sample or any of its subgroups. Age reached statistical significance as a negative
276 predictor among noncarriers (OR 0.93 for every year increase in age, 95% CI 0.87 - 0.99,
277 $p = 0.02$). This is consistent with evidence that, in the neurotypical population, hallucinations
278 are more common in children than adults (Maijer, Begemann, Palmen, Leucht, & Sommer,
279 2018). However, as only three noncarriers had psychotic symptoms, this finding is likely to be
280 artifactual.

281 **3.2.5 Exploration of ASD Severity as Predictor**

282 The parameters of exploratory models that substituted categorical ASD diagnosis with contin-
283 uous ADOS Calibrated Severity Scores (CSS) are presented in **Table S2** (for total CSS) and
284 **Table S3** (for domain CSS).

285 Total CSS trended toward significance as a predictor of psychotic symptoms among all
286 participants who received the ADOS (OR 1.21 for every one point increase in CSS, 95% CI
287 0.99 - 1.47, $p = 0.06$). We did not find that domain CSS for RRB or SA were significant
288 predictors.

289 **3.2.6 Robustness of Findings**

290 Less stringently-defined versions of the composite psychotic symptom index produced results
291 similar to the version four results reported above. Duplication status and ASD diagnosis
292 consistently predicted psychotic symptoms.

293 Version one, which had a CBCL/ABCL T-Score threshold of ≥ 60 and no age cutoff, identi-
294 fied thirty-five participants as having likely psychotic symptoms. Using this group, duplication
295 status, ASD diagnosis, and OCD symptoms were significant predictors of psychotic symptoms
296 in the entire sample (duplication: OR 5.13, 95% CI 1.70 - 15.49, $p < 0.001$; ASD diagnosis: OR
297 2.83, 95% CI 1.08 - 7.40, $p = 0.03$; OCD symptoms: OR 3.32, 95% CI 1.14 - 9.70, $p = 0.03$).
298 OCD symptoms were also a significant predictor among deletion carriers alone (OR 7.22, 95%
299 CI 1.30 - 40.09, $p = 0.02$).

300 Version two, which added the requirement that a participant to be at least seven years
301 old to be identified with psychotic symptoms, reduced the number identified from thirty-five to
302 thirty. Here, duplication status and ASD diagnosis, but not OCD, were significant predictors of
303 psychotic symptoms in the entire sample (duplication: OR 6.29, 95% CI 1.86 - 21.25, $p < 0.01$,
304 ASD: OR 2.80, 95% CI 1.02 - 7.70, $p = 0.046$).

305 Version three, which had no age cutoff but raised the CBCL/ABCL threshold, reduced
306 participants identified as likely having psychotic symptoms from thirty-five to twenty-one.
307 Duplication status and ASD continued to predict psychotic symptoms in the entire sample
308 (duplication: OR 6.64, 95% CI 1.81 - 24.39, $p < 0.01$; ASD: OR 4.13, 95% CI 1.27 - 13.37,
309 $p = 0.02$). OCD was not statistically significant.

310 As the deletion carrier group was younger than the duplication carrier or noncarrier groups,
311 we conducted an additional sensitivity analysis that constrained the entire sample to partic-
312 ipants who were at least twelve years old. In this restricted sample (total $n = 327$, with 37
313 deletion carriers, 53 duplication carriers, and 237 non-carriers), we found that duplication sta-
314 tus remained a significant predictor of psychotic symptoms (OR 39.00, 95% CI 7.34 – 208,
315 $p = 0.00002$). ASD was not a significant predictor, and no participants in this age-constrained
316 sample had OCD symptoms.

317 4 Discussion

318 Our findings indicate an association between 16p11.2 duplication status and psychotic symp-
319 toms. This aligns with previous studies that reported the 16p11.2 duplication in schizophrenia
320 genetic samples (Giaroli, Bass, Strydom, Rantell, & McQuillin, 2014; McCarthy et al., 2009;
321 Rees et al., 2014; Steinberg et al., 2014).

322 We were unable to detect a significant association between 16p11.2 deletion and psychotic
323 symptoms. This conflicts with reports of schizophrenia diagnosis in association with 16p11.2
324 deletion carriers (Kushima et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2017). However, we may have been
325 underpowered to detect an association. Only four deletion carriers had psychotic symptoms in
326 our sample, compared with twelve duplication carriers, which is consistent with recent evidence
327 suggesting that psychotic symptoms may be less common in 16p11.2 deletion than duplication
328 carriers (Niarchou et al., 2019).

329 Independent of the type of CNV, ASD diagnosis was also a significant predictor of psychosis
330 risk among 16p11.2 CNV carriers in our primary analysis. Our exploratory analyses of potential
331 relationships between ASD severity as measured by ADOS Calibrated Severity Scores and
332 psychosis risk did not yield significant results. However, many participants, most of whom
333 were noncarriers, did not receive the ADOS and had to be excluded from these models. This
334 reduction in sample size, along with the exclusion of noncarriers, many of whom may not have
335 had significant ASD symptoms, could have biased us against detecting an effect.

336 Though we did not find an association between psychotic symptoms and OCD, we did find
337 that OCD symptoms were more common in 16p11.2 CNV carriers than noncarriers. This sug-

338 gests that 16p11.2 may warrant future exploration in genetic studies of OCD, which currently
339 are limited (Fernandez, Leckman, & Pittenger, 2018). As of now, 16p11.2 duplication has been
340 described in, but not specifically associated with, OCD (McGrath et al., 2014).

341 This study has important strengths, primarily pertaining to the unique Simons VIP sample.
342 The specific focus on a rare genetic variant allowed us to minimize underlying genetic hetero-
343 geneity in exploring the relationship between ASD and risk of psychotic symptoms. Further,
344 we tested convergent validity across multiple measures within our psychotic symptom index.
345 We also were able to verify the stability of our results using alternate versions of the composite
346 psychotic symptom index with different levels of stringency.

347 This study also has important limitations. Our use of the VIP cohort, despite its advan-
348 tages, necessarily restricted the conclusions we could draw. Although Simons VIP sought to
349 mitigate ascertainment bias by conducting cascade testing, a large proportion of the cohort's
350 deletion carriers in particular were identified probands. Thus, it is unclear to what extent our
351 findings may generalize to deletion carriers who have not come to clinical attention. As our
352 study excluded 16p11.2 CNV carriers with additional known mutations associated with neu-
353 rodevelopmental abnormalities, it is also unclear to what extent our findings might generalize
354 to such individuals, in whom these additional genetic variants might affect their phenotype.

355 Our focus on a rare CNV limited our sample size, which in turn restricted the statistical
356 power we could achieve. The ratio between the number of participants with psychotic symptoms
357 and the number of predictors in our regression models, while in an acceptable range (van
358 Smeden et al., 2016; Vittinghoff & McCulloch, 2007), could have introduced a potential for
359 overfitting, particularly in subgroup analyses, though our sensitivity analyses were partially
360 able to address this.

361 The deletion carriers in our study were, on average, significantly younger than other partic-
362 ipants. Our inability to detect an association between deletion status and psychotic symptoms
363 should therefore not be construed as evidence of no association. Psychotic symptoms could
364 potentially develop in members of this group as they enter adolescence and young adulthood,
365 and although we still did not detect an association when we restricted the sample to older
366 participants, the resultant reduction in the deletion group's sample size limited our power.

367 Finally, our psychotic symptom index, though carefully developed, used a combination

368 of self- and parent-report measures with varying levels of specificity for psychosis. As the
369 CBCL/ABCL Thought Problems factor includes behavioral symptoms other than psychosis, it
370 is probably the least specific measure we used, followed by DISC, which incorporates DSM-IV
371 “negative” schizophrenia symptoms that overlap with ASD. However, with the SCL-90-R and
372 M-SOPS, we were able to use individual items with high specificity, and M-SOPS in particular
373 was designed specifically for the detection of psychosis. We further increased specificity by
374 requiring participants to screen positive on two different measures for us to consider them
375 as having likely psychotic symptoms. Still, it is conceivable that there was heterogeneity
376 in how participants met the threshold for likely psychotic symptoms and that at least some
377 participants identified as having symptoms by the index may not have “true” clinical psychosis.
378 Regarding this potential issue, we consider it reassuring that the majority of participants who
379 met the threshold (15 of 19) did so by a combination of CBCL/ABCL and some other, more
380 specific measure, either DISC (11), SCL-90-R (3) or M-SOPS (1). Our finding of a robust
381 association between psychotic symptoms as identified by our index and 16p11.2 duplication is
382 also consistent with existing literature.

383 Our work suggests several future directions for research. In subgroup analyses, we observed
384 that ASD predicted psychotic symptoms at trend-level within the duplication group (OR: 4.46,
385 95% CI 0.91 – 21.81, $p = 0.07$) but not within the deletion group. This should not be over-
386 interpreted, but may be worth exploring further, in larger samples, to determine whether it
387 is robust. If the ASD associated with 16p11.2 duplication but not deletion is in some sense
388 “psychosis-prone,” it may help in understanding how and why certain individuals with ASD
389 develop SCZ while others do not.

390 Our “psychotic symptom index” approach should also be further tested for validity. Is it
391 truly measuring psychotic symptoms, or are ASD-related behaviors leading to false positives?
392 How might it perform in a population of, for example, SCZ patients without ASD? Accu-
393 rate measurement will be crucial if the relationship between ASD and psychotic risk is to be
394 delineated.

395 Longitudinal exploration of symptom evolution in 16p11.2 CNV carriers into adolescence
396 and adulthood is important and is underway. This may be of particular importance for deletion
397 carriers. Are psychotic symptoms truly less common in this group, or was this a function of its

398 overall young age?

399 We hope to answer these and other questions. by conducting in-person interviews, cor-
400 relating clinical metrics with neuroimaging findings, and longitudinally following the Simons
401 VIP cohort. In doing so, we will more deeply characterize the 16p11.2 deletion and duplica-
402 tion phenotypes, and help generate hypotheses and insights applicable to psychotic and other
403 symptoms in a general ASD population.

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416 conflicts of interest.

Characteristic	Total n = 546		Duplication n = 109		Deletion n = 131		Noncarrier n = 306		Main effect p (ANOVA)	Post-hoc comparisons Pair	p (Tukey)
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Age in years	23.06	16.95	19.84	17.54	10.92	10.37	29.40	15.86	$2.39 \times 10^{-28***}$	duplication-deletion noncarrier-deletion noncarrier-duplication	<0.001*** <0.001*** <0.001***
IQ	97.69	20.34	84.59	22.01	82.73	15.61	108.76	13.54	$5.38 \times 10^{-57***}$	duplication-deletion noncarrier-deletion noncarrier-duplication	0.65 <0.001*** <0.001***
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	p (χ^2)	Pair	p (Bonferroni-adjusted χ^2)
Female sex	292	53.48	53	48.62	63	48.09	176	57.52	0.10	N/A: no significant main effect	
ASD diagnosis	48	8.79	17	15.60	27	20.61	4	1.31	$1.08 \times 10^{-11***}$	duplication-deletion noncarrier-deletion noncarrier-duplication	1 <0.001*** <0.001***
OCD symptoms reported	35	6.41	11	10.09	18	13.74	6	1.96	$5.31 \times 10^{-6***}$	duplication-deletion noncarrier-deletion noncarrier-duplication	1 <0.001*** 0.002**

***: $p < 0.001$
 **: $p < 0.01$
 *: $p < 0.05$

Table 1: Sample characteristics

Domain	Measure	Age	Type	Total n = 546	Duplication n = 109	Deletion n = 131	Noncarrier n = 306
ASD	ADOS	Youth and Adults	Clinician assessment of participant	315	97	121	97
	ADI-R	Youth and Adults	Interview with parent	116	33	74	9
	BAPQ	Adults	Questionnaire (participant)	252	36	13	203
	SCQ	Youth	Questionnaire (parent)	237	60	102	75
	SRS	Youth	Questionnaire (parent)	237	60	101	76
	SRS-ARV	Adults	Questionnaire (individual who knows participant well)	253	39	12	202
IQ	Mullen	Youth	Clinician assessment of participant	63	22	30	11
	DAS-II Early Years (Lower)	Youth	Clinician assessment of participant	28	8	12	8
	DAS-II Early Years (Upper)	Youth	Clinician assessment of participant	60	13	24	23
	DAS-II School Age	Youth	Clinician assessment of participant	151	35	65	51
	WASI	Adults	Clinician assessment of participant	271	42	14	215
Psychiatric symptoms	CBCL	Youth	Questionnaire (parent)	194	47	85	62
	ABCL	Adults	Questionnaire (individual who knows participant well)	88	37	12	39
	SCL-90-R	Adults	Questionnaire (participant)	271	43	14	214
	DISC	Youth	Interview with parent	178	42	81	55
	M-SOPS	Youth and Adults	Clinician assessment of subject	26	15	8	3

Table 2: Phenotypic assessment measures

Measure	Total n = 546			Duplication n = 109			Deletion n = 131			Noncarrier n = 306		
	# Received	# Positive	% Positive	# Received	# Positive	% Positive	# Received	# Positive	% Positive	# Received	# Positive	% Positive
CBCL/ABCL	282	56	19.86	84	27	32.14	97	21	21.65	101	8	7.92
SCL-90-R	271	50	18.45	43	19	44.19	14	7	50	24	24	11.21
DISC	178	23	12.92	42	7	16.67	81	8	9.88	55	8	14.55
SOPS	26	9	5.06	15	5	11.9	8	3	3.7	3	1	1.82

Table 3: Index measures by carrier status

Pairwise combination		Number of participants		Relationship strength			
		<i>w/ both measures</i>	<i>w/ both positive</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>95% CI lower</i>	<i>95% CI upper</i>	<i>p</i>
CBCL/ABCL	× SCL-90-R	91	10	2.25	0.74	6.77	0.12
	× DISC	177	20	7.71	2.16	42.21	0.0002***
	× M-SOPS	25	5	1.83	0.25	15.77	0.67
SCL-90-R	× M-SOPS	17	3	5.96	0.35	391.49	0.25
	× DISC	N/A: no co-occurrence between items					
DISC	× M-SOPS	9	1	4.58	0.04	543.93	0.42

***: $p < 0.001$

** : $p < 0.01$

* : $p < 0.05$

Table 4: Pairwise combinations between index measures

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	Wald χ^2	<i>OR</i>	<i>95% CI lower</i>	<i>95% CI upper</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	-3.98	1.45	7.57	0.02	0.00	0.32	0.01
Duplication	2.01	0.73	7.52	7.44	1.77	31.18	0.006**
Deletion	0.51	0.89	0.32	1.66	0.29	9.55	0.57
Age in years	0.01	0.01	0.37	1.01	0.98	1.03	0.55
IQ	-0.01	0.01	0.53	0.99	0.97	1.02	0.47
ASD diagnosis	1.44	0.6	5.81	4.21	1.31	13.56	0.02*
OCD symptoms	0.73	0.74	0.97	2.08	0.49	8.91	0.33
Biological sex	0.01	0.47	0.00	1.01	0.40	2.53	0.98

***: $p < 0.001$

** : $p < 0.01$

* : $p < 0.05$

Table 5: Predictors of psychotic symptoms in entire sample

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	Wald χ^2	<i>OR</i>	95% <i>CI</i> lower	95% <i>CI</i> upper	<i>p</i>
<i>Duplication carriers only</i>							
(Intercept)	-1.79	1.52	1.39	0.17	0.01	3.26	0.24
Age in years	0.02	0.02	1.29	1.02	0.99	1.05	0.26
IQ	-0.01	0.02	0.41	0.99	0.96	1.02	0.52
ASD diagnosis	1.49	0.81	3.4	4.46	0.91	21.81	0.07
OCD symptoms	N/A : no duplication carriers positive for psychotic symptoms had OCD symptoms						
Biological sex	-0.29	0.68	0.18	0.75	0.2	2.85	0.67
<i>Deletion carriers only</i>							
(Intercept)	-6.52	3.62	3.25	0.00	0.00	1.76	0.07
Age in years	0.00	0.03	0.02	1.00	0.95	1.06	0.90
IQ	0.02	0.03	0.46	1.02	0.96	1.08	0.50
ASD diagnosis	1.41	1.17	1.45	4.10	0.41	40.63	0.23
OCD symptoms	1.94	1.17	2.76	6.99	0.70	69.31	0.10
Biological sex	0.47	1.24	0.14	1.60	0.14	18.05	0.70
<i>Noncarriers only</i>							
(Intercept)	-0.71	2.91	0.06	0.49	0	146.86	0.81
Age in years	-0.08	0.03	5.58	0.93	0.87	0.99	0.02
IQ	-0.03	0.03	0.85	0.97	0.91	1.03	0.36
ASD diagnosis	N/A: no noncarriers positive for psychotic symptoms had ASD						
OCD symptoms	2.09	1.46	2.05	8.12	0.46	142.96	0.15
Biological sex	0.56	1.69	0.11	1.75	0.06	47.71	0.74

***: $p < 0.001$

** : $p < 0.01$

* : $p < 0.05$

Table 6: Predictors of psychotic symptoms within carrier status-defined subsets

Measure	Item(s)
CBCL/ABCL	<p><i>Thought Problems T Score ≥ 60 based on the following:</i></p> <p>Hears sound or voices that aren't there Sees things that aren't there Strange behavior Strange ideas Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions Repeats certain acts over and over; compulsions Picks nose, skin, or other parts of body (CBCL) / Picks skin or other parts of body (ABCL) Plays with own sex parts too much Plays with own sex parts in public Stores up too many things he/she doesn't need Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide Nervous movements or twitching Trouble sleeping Talks or walks in sleep Sleeps less than most kids (CBCL) / most people (ABCL)</p>
SCL-90-R	<p><i>Response of at least "a little bit" to "for the past week, how much were you bothered by . . . ":</i></p> <p>The idea that someone else can control your thoughts Hearing voices that other people do not hear Other people being aware of your private thoughts Having thoughts that are not your own</p>
DISC	<p><i>At least one DSM-IV schizophrenia symptom within the past year:</i></p> <p>Delusions Hallucinations Disorganized speech Grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior Negative symptoms</p>
M-SOPS	<p><i>One or more of the following symptoms is present:</i></p> <p>Unusual thought content/delusional ideas Suspiciousness/persecutory ideas Grandiosity Perceptual abnormalities/hallucinations</p>

Table S1: Psychotic symptom index measures

Predictor	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald χ^2	OR	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	-2.3	1.59	2.08	0.10	0.00	2.29	0.15
Duplication	0.60	0.66	0.82	1.82	0.50	6.70	0.37
Deletion	-0.86	0.85	1.02	0.42	0.08	2.25	0.31
Age in years	0.02	0.01	2.25	1.02	0.99	1.05	0.13
IQ	-0.02	0.01	1.68	0.98	0.96	1.01	0.19
Total CSS	0.19	0.10	3.56	1.21	0.99	1.47	0.06
OCD symptoms	-0.05	0.87	0.00	0.95	0.17	5.22	0.95
Biological sex	-0.13	0.52	0.06	0.88	0.32	2.42	0.80

***: $p < 0.001$

** : $p < 0.01$

* : $p < 0.05$

Table S2: ADOS Total Calibrated Severity Score as predictor of psychotic symptoms

Predictor	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald χ^2	OR	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	-1.79	1.87	0.92	0.17	0.00	6.47	0.34
Duplication	0.81	0.88	0.84	2.24	0.40	12.53	0.36
Deletion	-0.27	0.98	0.07	0.77	0.11	5.23	0.79
Age	0.03	0.02	3.47	1.03	1.00	1.06	0.06
IQ	-0.03	0.01	5.64	0.97	0.94	0.99	0.02
RRB CSS	0.10	0.14	0.52	1.11	0.84	1.47	0.47
SA CSS	0.13	0.13	1.08	1.14	0.89	1.46	0.30
OCD symptoms	0.33	0.79	0.17	1.39	0.30	6.54	0.68
Biological sex	0.65	0.62	1.10	1.91	0.57	6.42	0.29

***: $p < 0.001$

** : $p < 0.01$

* : $p < 0.05$

Table S3: ADOS domain calibrated severity scores as predictors of psychosis

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