

IMPROBABLE MEDICAL REVIEW

Improbable diagnoses, techniques, and research

compiled by Bertha Vanatian, *Improbable Research staff*

The Case of the Stinky Doll Shoes

“Doll Shoes: The Cause of Behavioural Problems?”
A.K. Leung, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*,
vol. 131, no. 10, November 15, 1984, p. 1193. The author,
at Alberta Children’s Hospital in Calgary, reports:

One evening, while relatives were visiting from Toronto, his mother slept with him. After 20 minutes in bed she started to feel very nauseated, felt as though she were floating and had a severe headache. At the same time she could smell a very strong odour in the bed, and when she rolled over she realized that the shoes on the doll were the cause of the odour and of her feeling ill. The shoes were discoloured and the stench was very strong.

The woman put the shoes away and since that time has noticed a marked improvement in her child’s behaviour.

Doll shoes: the cause of behavioural problems?

I would like to report my experience with a child who had quite a marked behavioural change recently following exposure to a pair of offensive-

The Case of the Stinky/Non-stinky Genome

“Dependence of Deodorant Usage on ABCC11 Genotype: Scope for Personalized Genetics in Personal Hygiene,”
Santiago Rodriguez, Colin D Steer, Alexandra Farrow, Jean Golding and Ian N.M. Day, *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, epub January 17, 2013. The authors, at the University of Bristol, Bristol and at Brunel University, U.K., explain:

Earwax type and axillary odor are genetically determined by rs17822931, a single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) located in the ABCC11 gene.... Influence on deodorant usage has not been investigated. In this work, we present a detailed analysis of the rs17822931 effect on deodorant usage in a large (N~17,000 individuals) population cohort. We found strong evidence

indicating differential deodorant usage according to the rs17822931 genotype... 77.8% of white European genotypically nonodorous individuals still used deodorant, and 4.7% genotypically odorous individuals did not. We provide evidence of a behavioral effect associated with rs17822931. This effect has a biological basis that can result in a change in the family’s environment if an aerosol deodorant is used. It also indicates potential cost saving to the nonodorous and scope for personalized genetics usage in personal hygiene choices, with consequent reduction of inappropriate chemical exposures for some.

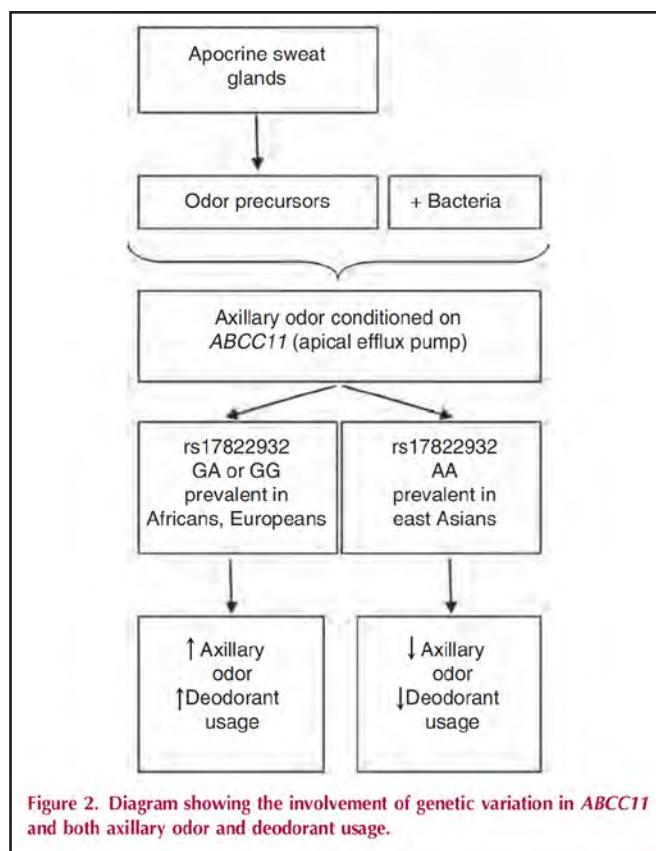
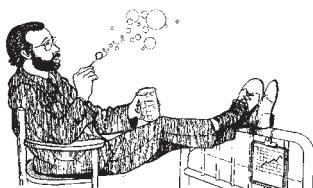


Figure 2. Diagram showing the involvement of genetic variation in ABCC11 and both axillary odor and deodorant usage.

Detail from the study “Dependence of Deodorant Usage on ABCC11 Genotype: Scope for Personalized Genetics in Personal Hygiene.”



We welcome your suggestions for this and other columns. Please enclose the full citation (no abbreviations!) and, if possible, a copy of the paper.