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**ABSTRACT**

GABRA2 and frequency of alcohol consumption in a college population

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**METHODS**

Sample: Spit for Science
- 2011 Freshmen Cohort
- Survey (Spring 2011) & DNA samples (genotyped on Affymetrix Axiom BioBank array)
- Total N = 1,004
- Linear regression with age, sex, and ethnicity as covariates (valid N = 786)
- Tested SNPs: rs1113346, rs8322051, rs4349209, rs58111, rs17537359, rs665148, rs116039536, rs11685934

**RESULTS**

**INTRODUCTION**

Freshmen year of college is the first time, for most students, when they are away from home and have a new sense of freedom. According to the NIAAA, about 4 out of 5 college students drink alcohol. Studies show that certain high risk GABRA2 genotypes are associated with subjective level of response to alcohol and consequently can affect the risk of one developing alcohol use disorders. The objective of this study was to investigate the association between specific GABRA2 variants and alcohol use frequency in a sample of college students. VCU freshman in the 2011 fall semester were given the opportunity to complete the Spit for Science survey and provide a DNA sample. Linear regression was used to test the relationship between alcohol use frequency and GABRA2 variation. We also investigated the possible moderating effect of peer deviance on this relationship. The proposed questions addressed in this study are highly important because they may provide us with information on how to potentially help young adults from developing alcohol dependence.

**RESULTS**

- We found no significant association between GABRA2 and alcohol use frequency.
- We likewise found no significant moderating effects of peer deviance on the relationship between GABRA2 and alcohol use.
- We did find that a student’s age was positively associated with the frequency of alcohol consumption (see figure 4).

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