
Hearing loss is very common in people with distal 18q-. In a significant number of individuals, this is caused by narrow ear canals. However, even individuals with normal ear canals frequently have some hearing loss. The goal of this study was to understand the sensorineural component of hearing loss in people with 18q-. Sensorineural hearing loss refers to hearing loss that is caused by a change in the way that nerves conduct sound to the brain. In our study, 24 of the 38 participants had high-frequency hearing loss. The pattern of hearing loss was similar to the pattern seen in age-related hearing loss. In essence, these participants had the type of hearing loss we would expect to see in older people. We suspect this high-frequency hearing loss may be related to the dysmyelination commonly seen in people with 18q-, but additional research is necessary to confirm this hypothesis.