



What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

IS EVERYONE WITH BLUE EYES RELATED?

"New research shows that people with **blue eyes** have a single, common ancestor" according to research reported in *Science Daily*. Professor Eiberg from the Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine at the University of Copenhagen was able to find the genetic mutation that he believes took place 6,000-10,000 years ago. A very specific mutation effected the OCA2 gene. The OCA2 gene produces P-protein "which is involved in the production of melanin, the pigment that gives color to our hair, eyes and skin" says Science Daily. Only the part of the gene that involves the color of the iris is effected; the skin and hair color remain "**normal.**" Failure of the entire gene leads to albinism, a condition in which there is no pigment in the hair, skin or eye.

"The spectrum from brown to green is explained by the variation in the amount of dark pigment, **melanin**, contained in the iris. Blue eyes have little melanin in their irises and do not have much range in their color."

Testing the mitochondrial DNA from blue eyed people, from random areas including Jordan, Denmark and Turkey showed all to have this same genetic mutation that is, everyone with blue eyes is related which may not be good news for all.

So, all blue eyed patients are very distant cousins. What an interesting discovery!

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