

# New Research From Psychological Science

February 06, 2015

Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

## [Targeted Rejection Predicts Decreased Anti-Inflammatory Gene Expression and Increased Symptom Severity in Youth With Asthma](#)

*Michael L. M. Murphy, George M. Slavich, Edith Chen, and Gregory E. Miller*

Targeted rejection — the intentional rejection of a person by an individual or group — seems to be a uniquely damaging form of interpersonal stress. Participants between the ages of 9 and 18 with diagnosed asthma were assessed every 6 months for 2 years. At each assessment, participants underwent a blood draw and a stress interview and reported their daily asthma symptoms for 2 weeks following each visit. The researchers found associations between targeted rejection and the expression of signaling molecules that regulate airway inflammation — a relationship that was stronger in youths who rated themselves as being higher in social status. The researchers posit that social instability takes a higher toll on high-status youths, possibly because they have the most to lose from changes in their social status.

*Edith Chen will be giving an invited address titled “Socioeconomic Disparities in Children’s Health: Processes and Protective Factors” at the [27th APS Annual Convention](#) in New York, NY, USA.*

## [More Power to the Unconscious: Conscious, but Not Unconscious, Exogenous Attention Requires Location Variation](#)

*Zhicheng Lin and Scott O. Murray*

In this study, the researchers asked whether it is possible for a cue to facilitate performance on a task only when it is presented unconsciously. Participants completed a repeated-cuing procedure in which a cue appeared at a fixed location for a series of trials and was then completely removed for another series of trials. The cues were presented so that they were either visible or invisible to participants. The researchers found that the cues had a facilitation effect, but only when they were invisible to participants. The researchers believe that there was a lack of facilitation when the cue was visible because of an attentional bias to the cued location in the subsequent no-cue trials — something the researchers term negative attentional aftereffect.