

Which Comes First the Girl Brain or the Boy Brain?



Who knew that men and women could be confronting one another over their differences so early on?

What we know for sure is that once an egg is fertilized by the sperm it remains female until around the 8th week. At this point, the brain's embryonic structure starts to appear more human like. There is the beginning of the cerebral cortex and the major organs of the eyes, ears, nose and mouth. The genitalia in its fetal form is also female until it fully develops into ovaries or testes.

It has been understood that until the brain receives a **surge of the hormone testosterone** from the testes around the 8th week the brain remains female. So, sorry guys... for all the power of your Y chromosomes, you don't kick into maleness right a way, but you do make up for it later.

But ... there may be a glitch to giving too much credibility to the power of testosterone creating the male brain.

Carina Dennis, author of *Brain development: The most important sex organ*, writes in *Nature*, 2004 that based on animal studies, the male and female brains may be separating themselves even earlier than previously thought.

Geneticists have identified 51 genes out of a total of 12,000 active brain genes that can express a male or female brain before the reproductive organs (gonads) are even form. Also recently discovered is a 'master switch' gene (SRY) which is

responsible for activating the development of the male testes which in turn releases testosterone.

Apparently the role of genetic activity within the embryonic brain is a key element in brain gender along with the later presence or absence of testosterone.

So ladies score one for your side, you've got a slight edge with your girl brain coming first.

By Joyce Hansen