

'I Can't Help It!'

Does Your Man Have The Cheating Gene?

It's party season, your partner's out every night and new research says the tendency to be unfaithful could be down to genetics. Lookinvestigates if we need to be concerned

It's shocking news: not only is cheating on the rise, but for the first time ever, it's been reported men might not be able to help their infidelity. Yep, research has revealed there *is* a cheating gene, and it's one you can inherit from your parents in the same way you get your eye colour. In fact, if your partner's dad cheated on his mum, he's twice as likely to cheat on you.

'Our research clearly shows that people's genetic make-up influences how likely they are to have sex with someone outside their main partnership,' says Dr Brendan Zietsch, who led the study at the University Of Queensland – and found that 63% of unfaithful behaviour in men could be put down to genetics.

Michael*, 32, isn't surprised. Good looking and charming, he's aware he wouldn't get much attention from women on nights out if they knew he was married, so he keeps his wedding ring tucked in his wallet, alongside condoms. And while he knows this genetic finding doesn't excuse his behaviour, he says it helps explain it.

'I've always cheated on partners,' he says. 'I thought I'd stop when I got married, but I'm away for work a lot and I slept with a woman six months after my wedding. I don't know why I do it – my parents' marriage broke

down because of Dad's infidelity though, so it seems to run in the family.'

The gene, called DRD4, means some men have a chemical rush when they have an affair. It's addictive, so sufferers feel the need to get the same rush on a regular basis. It's a good excuse, but without proper testing, it's hard to find out if your partner has the gene.

It's also not *all* genetic – emotional stability and personal experience plays a part, too. Relationship coach Sam

Owens says: 'If we idolise a parent who cheated, then their behaviour becomes more acceptable to us.' But just because your man's parents' marriage ended due to infidelity, it doesn't mean he's bound to cheat. 'As we reach adulthood, we're able to use an independent

frame of reference for judging parents' behaviours,' says Sam. 'If you feel ashamed of what they've done, you often stand for completely the opposite.'

'I've seen the damage cheating has done to my parents,' says Michael. 'I'd like to change as I don't want to end up like my dad, but I just get too tempted.'

So what steps can Michael take? 'If someone wants to change their lifestyle, they have to look at what needs they are trying to satisfy and look at healthier ways of fulfilling them,' says Sam. 'You are not destined to become your parents, you're destined to become the person want to be.'

I don't want to end up like my dad, but I just get too tempted



Jude Law and Sienna Miller hit the rocks after it was claimed he had slept with his children's nanny, Daisy Wright



Sandra Bullock split from husband Jesse James after he admitted cheating on her with numerous women



Film director Rupert Sanders was caught in a steamy clinch with Kristen Stewart, leading to divorce from his wife Liberty Ross

'I 100% Can't Stop Myself Cheating'

Jaiden Michael, 30, from Liverpool explains why he thinks he inherited his cheating ways from his dad



I've cheated on every girlfriend I've ever had. I know this makes me sound like a terrible person, but a lot of the reasons I do it are down to insecurity: I watched my dad cheat on my mum, then on my stepmum, so I've always had this insecurity that I'm going to be cheated on. That's why I just go out and do it before they can to me.

In my last relationship, I did *try* not to cheat, and for a couple of months I managed, but then I caved. The only way I can describe it is like an alcoholic: I was trying to wean myself off cheating. With Facebook and Twitter, it's so easy to meet people. Mum says if social media had been around when Dad was younger, he'd have gone wild – so I stopped accepting when someone hot added me. It didn't work.

The thing is, I idolised my dad until I was 15 and had no idea he was unfaithful until I heard from one of my brothers. I was brokenhearted, and I've since cut all ties with him. That's why it sounds silly that I'm doing the same. But as soon as I meet someone, it's always in the back of my mind. My female friends despair of me, whereas guy friends all tend to cheat, too.

I'd hate it if my mum found out what I was up to. I know she'd be disappointed but I don't think I'll change. I could have counselling but I don't see how it would help. I think, psychologically, there's something wrong with me. You wouldn't judge someone with bipolar for their behaviour, so I think people shouldn't be so quick to judge me.'