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**ON THE COVER**



A Sherpa porter at the base of the Khumbu Ice Fall, Mount Everest. Some human populations exhibit greater tolerance for high elevation,

due to genetic variants that likely mitigate the deleterious effects of low oxygen concentrations at altitude. Genetic and epigenetic changes shape our response to the environment and may play a role in disease. For more on the interactions between genes and the environment, see page 52.

*Photo: Max Lowe/National Geographic Creative*

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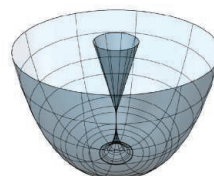
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SCIENCE (ISSN 0036-8075) is published weekly on Friday, except the last week in December, by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Periodicals mail postage (publication No. 484460) paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Copyright © 2016 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The title SCIENCE is a registered trademark of the AAAS. Domestic individual membership and subscription (51 issues): \$165 (\$74 allocated to subscription). Domestic institutional subscription (51 issues): \$1522. Foreign postage extra; Mexico, Caribbean (surface mail) \$55; other countries (air assist delivery) \$89. First class, airmail, student, and emeritus rates on request. Canadian rates with GST available upon request. GST #R1254 88122. Publications Mail Agreement Number 1069624. Printed in the U.S.A.

Change of address: Allow 4 weeks, giving old and new addresses and 8-digit account number. Postmaster: Send change of address to AAAS, P.O. Box 96178, Washington, DC 20090-6178. Single-copy sales: \$15.00 current issue, \$20.00 back issue prepaid includes surface postage; bulk rates on request. Authorization to photocopy material for internal or personal use under circumstances not falling within the fair use provisions of the Copyright Act is granted by AAAS to libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) Transactional Reporting Service, provided that \$35.00 per article is paid directly to CCC, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923. The identification code for Science is 0036-8075. Science is indexed in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and in several specialized indexes.

# Science

**354 (6308)**

*Science* **354** (6308), 15-142.

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