



# DNA TESTING KITS

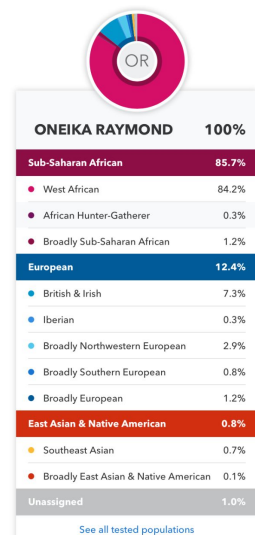
An Overview of Personal DNA Analysis

# What are DNA Testing Kits?

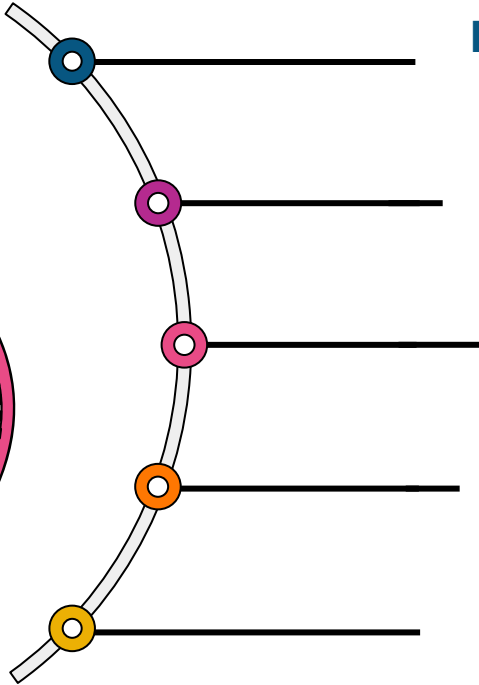
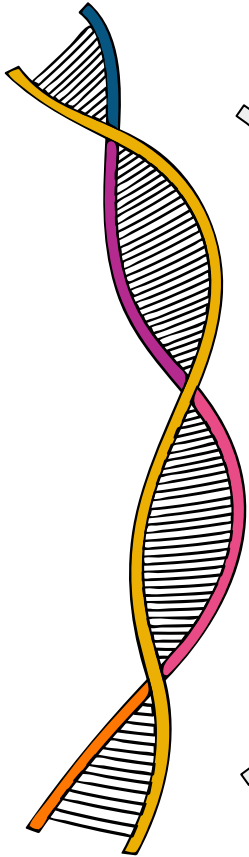
Within the last few years, the popularity of sending off one's DNA to a lab to be analyzed has skyrocketed; According to the MIT Technology Review, as of 2019 more than 26 Million People had taken an at home DNA tests.

The leading providers for these consumer DNA tests are 23andMe, AncestryDNA, Family Tree DNA, MyHeritage DNA, and Living DNA.

With just a small vial of saliva these tests can reveal ancestry, ethnic makeup, reveal genetic predispositions to diseases and risk factors within DNA for these illnesses, and even connect you with others who have taken the test with a family connection.



## What's All the Hype?



**It's a fun way to learn about your family history and ethnic background.**

**You can be alerted to certain medical risks present in your DNA.**

**They can connect you with family members all over the world who have also taken the test.**

**They are extremely accurate as well as extremely easy to use.**

**Anyone can do them, even dogs.**



## So How Does it Work?

### ● Genotyping with Variants and SNPs

One of the things these kits test for are personal variants. Variants in the single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) describe the specific differences between two individuals in their DNA. Variants are passed down from parent to offspring and can indicate things like personal traits or diseases. SNPs can show your physical, mental, historical and genetic information down to traits as specific as whether or not your DNA indicates that you would be a good public speaker.

# How Can I Take One?

These kits are not only accessible to most people, but extremely easy to use. They can cost from about \$69-\$199 depending on which company you order your kit from.

To take the test, you simply need to provide a small sample of saliva in a provided vial and send it off to their labs.

After about six to eight weeks, you will be granted access to your information.

Some companies only provide ancestry and ethnic makeup, but you may also gain insight into your medical history, genetic traits and fun facts about your DNA.



# Which Testing Company is Right for Me?



**Ancestry  
DNA**

AncestryDNA is the best option for someone looking to find out mostly about their family tree. This service links your DNA to their existing Family Tree tracking software and can find relatives amongst your family tree or through DNA connected to yours.



**23andMe**

23andMe gives an extremely in depth look into not only ancestry but also analyzes your DNA sample to check for health risks and personal traits determined by your DNA. However its DNA database is smaller than Ancestry's so it might be harder to find genetic relatives.



**Family  
Tree DNA**

Family Tree DNA offers the most comprehensive options for testing- offering many add-ons to the basic genetic testing option. These extras can add up to a lot of money, so be aware that using all of their testing options will cost you. However, this company also provides all of their user information to law enforcement, so if privacy is a concern this may not be your pick.



**MyHeritage**

MyHeritage is the cheapest option at only \$59.99, but while it gives raw information about your genetic makeup, it doesn't give much else. This is a good option for a buyer on a budget.

# What are the Risks?

Before going to take your own- be aware that there are some privacy risks involved.

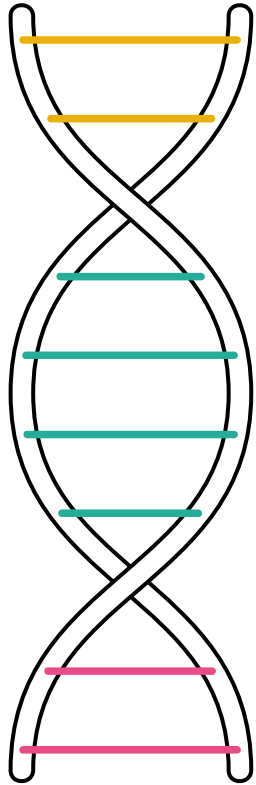
Having your DNA analyzed by these companies means granting them access to your personal information and ownership of your DNA sample as well.

When agree to the terms and conditions, you are also agreeing to whatever the company decides to do with your DNA in the future should their policy change.

Government and Law Enforcement agencies are aware of the library of data held by DNA testing companies, and can request and pressure the release of desired samples and their subsequent personal information.

The only law protecting your information, [genetic privacy. the Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act](#), has many experts worried, as they believe it is not broad enough to offer proper protection.

## Real World Applications



1



The Golden Gate Killer was caught after three decades using DNA evidence from an at-home kit.

2



Families all over the world have been able to reconnect with the genetic matches found by these companies.

3



People have been able to discover a genetic history and ethnic makeup they never knew and have been able to learn about their cultures.



# Extra Reading



[Before taking that DNA test: Six things you need to know](#)


[The spurious, questionable science behind DNA testing kits](#)

[Explainer: How DNA Testing Works](#)

[Should I get my DNA tested? We asked five experts](#)

# Robert Plunket's Story






The problem with using DNA search is that it is really just the first step in learning about your family history. Yes, it identified my ancestry as being 98% European Jew and 2% other (including .1% Inuit and I would love to know where that comes from , but that's about it.

On the other hand every week I get a list of 2 or 3 people from different parts of the world that share my DNA So if nothing else I learned my family was fairly prolific and got around.

Except for a few names of relatives I already knew there were no last names that I recognized so I could not tell if they were from my Mothers or my Father's side so there was not a lot of useful info until I received an e-mail from Pete Kneppell. I had seen my last name spelled that way on my Grandfather's Citizenship papers so I thought it was promising. In the e-mail Pete explained that he had received notice from the "Dept of Holocaust Victim's Assets" that he might be intitled to an inheritance if he could prove he was related to a certain Holocaust victim and he wanted to know if I had information that would help him. I became suspicious. I was sure he was going to ask me for money to do the research to get the info he needed in return he would share the inheritance. Second, how did he get my name? His name had not appeared on the list of relatives that I received!





I verified there is a Dept. of Holocaust Victims Assets in Israel and continued to exchange e-mails giving him what ever info I had about my Grandfather. About two weeks after that I received notice from Ancestry.com that he indeed was a 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin.

His grandparents and a child, Pete's father had fled Poland for France where the grandmother had a brother. They were eventually picked up by the Nazis and placed on a train for the concentration camp but the brother was able to bribe a guard to free the grandmother and child. She went on to join the resistance and fight the Nazis. I was proud to know that I had a relative brave enough to join the resistance!

My advice to anyone who wants to learn about their family history is don't stop with DNA but get someone who knows about Genealogy to help you research. Although you may not like what you find. With help I discovered my grandfather was probably a bigamist but my wife is a Daughter of the American Revolution.



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