

Genetic Testing

by Ewelina Błońska

Cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, or maybe Tay-Sachs disease? Is it possible to identify changes in genes? Genetic testing continues to increase in popularity, however it may both bring hope or inspire fear. This time *English Matters* presents the pros and cons of genetic testing.

Genetic testing is a type of medical test that identifies changes in genes, chromosomes or proteins. The results of a genetic test can confirm or rule out a suspected genetic condition, or help determine your chance of developing or passing on a genetic disorder. With just a sample of your saliva, you can decode your body's genetic responses and understand possible future health problems, ranging from cancer to Alzheimer's. Let's take a look at different opinions concerning this method.

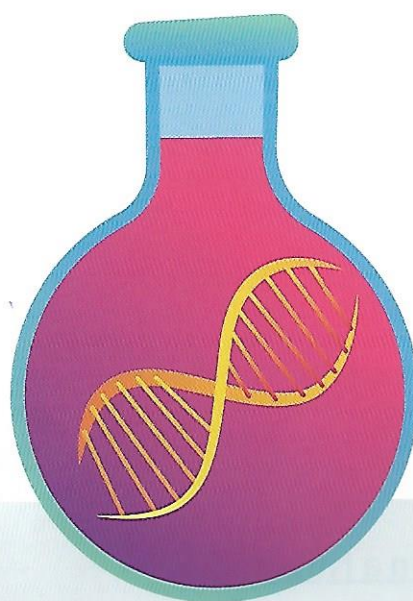
The Benefits of Genetic Testing

To be honest, I'm a great enthusiast of genetic testing. For me it is a great opportunity I would like to take advantage of. If you already have a disease, understanding what genetic variant you have could help choose the most suitable treatment. On the other hand, if you are not afflicted by a disease, knowing you are more susceptible to a particular condition could lead you to make positive lifestyle or behavioural changes to help lower the risk of getting that illness.

– Joanna

As I couldn't conceive a baby for years, my story is really tear-jerking. Struggling with miscarriages, my gynaecologist recommended preimplantation testing, which is also called preimplantation genetic diagnosis. This test may be used when you attempt to conceive a child through in-vitro fertilisation. The embryos are screened for genetic abnormalities and the healthy ones are implanted in the uterus in the hope of achieving a pregnancy.

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Thanks to this method, I got pregnant and gave birth to my little daughter. That was like a miracle for us!

– Amanda

My father suffered from Alzheimer's disease. Does that mean my memory will deteriorate as well? I would really like to know that. I don't treat genetic testing as clairvoyance, but rather as a great source of knowledge. If you know you are more at risk for developing Alzheimer's due to a genetic variation, you can change your lifestyle to try to lower your risk ahead of time. Eating a healthy, balanced diet, including at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day may, for instance, reduce the risk of dementia. Sounds like a great opportunity for both me and my family. Furthermore, for some types of cancer and other diseases, genetic testing can reveal that you are not predisposed to develop that disease, which could reduce your stress.

– Steven

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o cystic fibrosis | mukowiscydoza
 sickle cell disease | anemia
 sierpowatokrwinkowa
 gene | gen
 to increase in popularity | stawać się coraz
 bardziej popularnym
 pros and cons | za i przeciw
 1 to rule sth out | wykluczyć coś
 to pass on sth | przekazać coś
 genetic disorder | zaburzenie genetyczne,
 choroba genetyczna
 sample | próbka
 saliva | ślina
 cancer | rak (choroba)
 to take advantage of sth | skorzystać
 z czegoś
 suitable | odpowiedni
 treatment | leczenie
 on the other hand | z drugiej strony
 afflicted by sth | dotknięty przez coś
 susceptible to sth | podatny na coś
 to lead to sth | prowadzić do czegoś
 to conceive a baby | począć dziecko
 tear-jerking | wyciskający łzy
 to struggle with sth | zmagać się
 z czymś
 miscarriage | poronienie
 preimplantation | odnoszący się do okresu
 przed implantacją w macicy
 to attempt | próbować
 fertilisation | zapłodnienie
 screened for sth | kontrolowany pod kątem
 czegoś
 uterus | macica
 to achieve sth | osiągnąć coś
 pregnancy | ciąża
 2 to get pregnant | zająć w ciążę
 to deteriorate | pogorszyć się
 clairvoyance | jasnowidztwo
 due to sth | z powodu czegoś
 including sth | włącznie z czymś
 at least | przynajmniej
 furthermore | ponadto