

Dealing with GENETIC Information



Imagine one day waking up and finding out that your family is bigger than you thought...that your parents are not your biological parents...

Imagine your status of your university application will be based on your intelligence prediction marker coming from a genetic test and that your first job will be based on the results of this test...

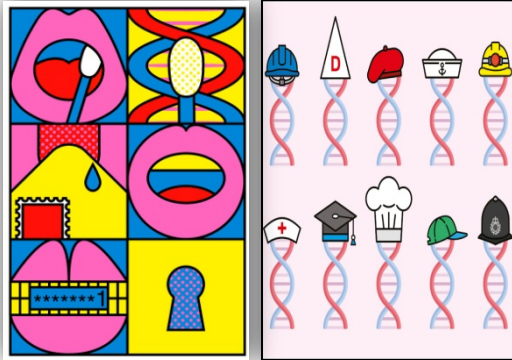
Imagine a health professional suggesting you to do a genetic test to find out the predisposition of developing a health condition and the possibilities of having a healthy baby... *Imagine* as well as an insurance company deciding the rate of your insurance based on the results of this test?

What could happen if everyone can analyse DNA? How do you think would you deal with the knowledge of the information coming from a genetic test?

Genetic testing involves looking at our DNA the genetic instructions that make us “ourselves”. These instructions shape how our body develop, grow, function and in many cases the same information can trigger disease. Our genetic information is stored in a long and twisted molecule, the DNA double helix that has over 3 billion letters, but when it comes to answer a question based on DNA we do not actually need to read all these letters because the lines that carry meaningful information are usually short. Everyone has variations in their DNA which is what make us unique.



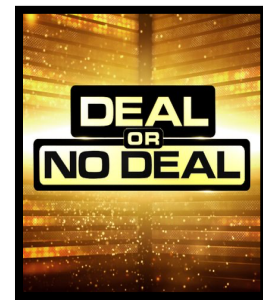
With genetic testing we can make copies of the gene of our interest until this gene will be visible, until we can read it, understand it, until we can answer: “Do I have the COVID-19?”, or “Am I at risk of cancer?”, “Is that child my son or my daughter?”, “Am I of Ancient Greek descent?”



Scientists use genetic testing in diagnosis to detect disease, in biotechnology to develop better treatment options or modify foods, in forensics to decide whether someone is innocent or guilty based on DNA evidence and in many other cases.

There are both positive and negative implications of the genetic testing depending on the point of view as well as the perception of the individuals who take the test or those who interpret the results of this kind of test.

We are trying to explain how our DNA defines our lives but should we also try to explain how our lives define our DNA? Do I want to do this genetic test? How would I deal with the knowledge of the information coming from this test? Deal or No Deal? My DNA might be or might not be nothing special.



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