

Supreme court may decide whether we own our genes

The following is an excerpt.

They may be responsible for everything in your life, from conception to death, they may be inside every living cell in your body – but you do not own your own [genes](#), legally speaking.

According to a report in [Genome Medicine](#) , patents essentially cover the entire human genome, hampering research and raising the question of “genomic liberty .”

The legal standing of genomic patents could change next month when the Supreme Court reviews patent rights for two key breast and ovarian cancer genes, BRCA1 and BRCA2, which include segments of genetic code as small as 15 nucleotides, known as 15mers.

“This is, so to speak, [patently ridiculous](#) ,” said report co-author Dr. Christopher E. Mason of [Weill Cornell Medical College](#) . “If patent claims that use these small DNA sequences are upheld, it could potentially create a situation where a piece of every gene in the human genome is patented by a phalanx of competing patents.”

View the original article here: [Supreme Court May Decide Whether We Own Our Genes](#)