

## Nabbing suspects with DNA

When Oscar Thwala was sentenced to life imprisonment 10 years ago on three counts of rape, two counts of kidnapping, and illegal possession of ammunition and firearms, he'd never heard of DNA or of its use as a forensic tool in criminal investigations.

So, when his lawyer told the then-23-year-old street vendor that the results of DNA tests taken after his arrest were “unimportant”, Thwala accepted his advice unquestioningly. Like many sentenced offenders, Thwala continued to protest his innocence long after his trial had been concluded. His protestations fell on deaf ears until 2006 when a doctor – behind bars for murdering his wife – at Baviaanspoort prison heard his story and explained just how crucial DNA could be in excluding a suspect.

**Read the full, original story here: [DNA: The missing justice link](#)**