

21st century will be the age of precision genetics

Until now, it has only been possible to “edit” a living genome using dangerously blunt methods; modified viruses are sure to alter infected cells’ DNA, but exactly how and where they will do so is beyond our control.

A new technique, developed from bacteria’s ability to slice up viruses, changes everything. The procedure is not only simple, it is breathtakingly precise. But if the process itself is astounding, its prospective uses are even more so. Indeed, “Crispr” – its technical name – has already spawned a flood of applied research in the year since it was developed at a university in California.

From improved crops to cleverer medicine, this is a step forward so profound that it takes genetics into a new era of practical benefits and ethical concerns.

Read the full, original story here: [March of science: The 21st century will be the age of genetics](#)