

## Will gene editing lead to 'biohackers' creating biological weapons?

The security services are concerned that 'biohackers' — groups of ordinary people who use genome editing techniques to alter lifeforms — could develop biological weapons or other potentially dangerous substances, an Oxford University academic has said.

Amateur scientists around the world have started using gene editing techniques after the tools became cheap and readily available.

And while most of these groups are harmless,...there were fears among other scientists and the security services that the technology could be used to create a new form of deadly virus.

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However[,] Professor Parrington...said creating a pathogenic form of bacteria that could cause significant health problems was not easy.

"It's actually quite difficult and not quite as trivial as some people might think to make a new form of virus that's lethal," he said.

"That's partly because nature is quite good at doing that itself and also because of the dangers to the people concerned."

And, for the most part, biohackers were enthusiastic amateurs who were involved in entirely peaceful pursuits.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Security services concerned amateur 'biohackers' could create biological weapons, academic says](#)**