

## Getting a head start: What parents can learn from prenatal genetic testing

*{Editor's note: Excerpts are from an interview with Bonnie Rochman, science journalist and author of the book [The Gene Machine: How Genetic Technologies Are Changing The Way We Have Kids ? And The Kids We Have](#), where she looks at the promises and challenges of genetic advances likely to shape our reproductive futures.}*

### **What kind of information do parents get from prenatal testing? Why would someone choose to get this testing done?**

I think what happens a lot of times is that women are unprepared for what they're going to learn. The more sophisticated the test, the more that women are at risk of learning information that is unclear or uncertain ? then you have to decide what to do with that information and how to process it.

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### **What's been some of the criticism leveled by the disabled community?**

A lot of people in the Down syndrome community have been very wary of what's called non-invasive prenatal testing, which is a blood test that's able to detect Down syndrome and some other chromosomal conditions in the first trimester, because they think it's just a fast-track to abortion.

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### **Is there a reason to do prenatal testing if abortion isn't something you're considering?**

The main reason you may want to have prenatal testing, even if you don't want to have an abortion, is to prepare for the birth of a child with special needs. You may want to change the hospital where you're going to deliver, or you may want to do a bunch of research ahead of time so that you know what to expect.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [How New Genetic Technologies Are Reshaping Pregnancy And Parenting](#)**