

Viewpoint: Consumer tests are ‘neither safe nor private’

As millions of Americans sat down to Thanksgiving dinner, the biomedical researcher [James Hazel](#) sent out a stark warning about the [genetic-testing kits](#) that he surmised would be a hot topic of conversation.

Most of them are neither safe nor private.

Hazel reached this conclusion after reviewing the privacy policies and terms of service of nearly 100 genetic-testing companies that offer their services directly to people.

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His [article](#) ... in the journal Science, found that nearly half lacked even a basic privacy document that governed genetic data.

Privacy isn't the only concern that experts have with consumer genetic tests. In addition to collecting sensitive data on ancestry, companies like 23andMe claim to show how your DNA affects your health. But clinicians, medical professors, and genetic counselors told Business Insider that this information is misleading and could put people at risk of missing warning signs for diseases like cancer.

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Experts agree it's time for a different model, something between a pricey doctor-ordered test and the limited spit kits available in drug stores. And though several companies are [trying new approaches](#), none has emerged as a leader. In the meantime, sensitive customer data is being uploaded and housed in large databases — sometimes forever.

Read full, original post: [Genetic testing is the future of healthcare, but many experts say companies like 23andMe are doing more harm than good](#)