

## DNA found in 10,000-year-old 'chewing gum' sheds light on ancient Sweden

In the 1990s, archaeologists recovered a few chewed-up lumps of birch bark pitch, some of which still held fingerprints and tooth marks left behind from millennia ago. Using this ancient chewing gum, archaeologist Natalija Kashuba of Uppsala University recently recovered DNA from [ancient Sweden.]

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The people who [migrated to Sweden] from Russia, for example, brought a technology called pressure flaking, which involves using a pointed stick or bone to break off small flakes from the edge of a stone tool, creating a sharp blade.

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When Kashuba and her colleagues compared the DNA from all three pieces of chewing gum to databases of ancient DNA from other sites, it turned out that the two women and the man from Huseby-Kiev were closely related to the Scandinavian hunter-gatherer group—but their genomes looked more like Mesolithic people from western Europe than from Russia. It's the first time archaeologists have found Scandinavian hunter-gatherer DNA clearly linked with stone tools, and it shows that people in Scandinavia 10,000 years ago were already using the newer eastern European method of pressure-flaking.

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The two groups were trading ideas, not just genes.

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