

## Consumer genetic tests promise rich rewards, but can yield ‘awkward surprises’

DNA testing is all about unlocking secrets. But sometimes surrendering your saliva may also mean surrendering a bit of privacy – yours or someone else’s.

“I think people need to be prepared and warned that they might find out something that could make them very uncomfortable,” said Jeff Hettinger, one of the growing number of people who submitted a sample and discovered a sibling he never knew existed. His dad had never told him.

DNA testing from the likes of leading services 23andMe and Ancestry, among others, has always boiled down to risk and reward, a fascination and curiosity about one’s roots and/or predispositions to disease, balanced against trepidations around privacy, security, and, for sure, the possibility of an awkward or identity-altering discovery.

It also has some of the top DNA testing companies in the industry banding together to put privacy front and center.

[MIT Technology Review](#) estimates more than 26 million people have taken an in-home ancestry test.

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Tracing your family and health roots via DNA can bring rich rewards. Just make sure those rewards match your tolerance for risk, privacy, and awkward surprises.

**Read full, original post:** [DNA testing can share all your family secrets. Are you ready for that?](#)