



# **FORT WICK GENEALOGY**

What can  

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DNA testing  

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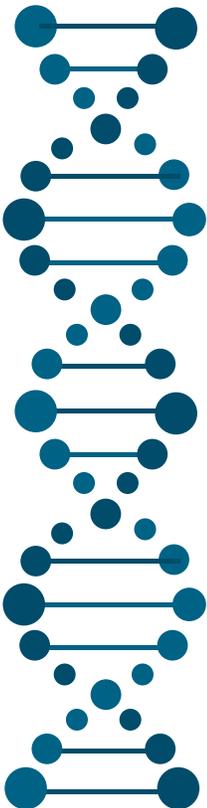
do for you?  

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# DNA testing can be invaluable in your genealogical research.

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When people first get their DNA test results back they are often overwhelmed and don't know where to begin.

If you are one of the millions of people who have had their autosomal DNA (atDNA) tested through one of the major testing companies and have come away feeling confused or questioning their validity, please know that you are not alone.

Many of the people that I talk to purchased their test believing that the testing company was going to tell them where their recent ancestors came from. Unfortunately, that's just not possible. What the tests are really telling you is that your DNA matches living people from these (fill-in-the-blank) countries. Period. That's it.

We will explain what DNA testing can do for you, and what it can not do.



# How can DNA testing help me with my genealogy?

- It can show you the approximate countries/continents where your ancestors were from
- It can show you the migration patterns your ancestors took and where they lived in the “New World” after their arrival
- It can help you break down your “brick walls” and solve long standing family mysteries
- It can discover missing branches of your family tree
- It can reveal hidden family secrets that may have only ever been hinted at in the past
- It can verify your traditional genealogical research, or completely disprove it
- It can help you discover your origins and connect you with living relatives
- It can offer vital hints and clues on where to target further research
- It can identify your biological family if you are adopted or have unknown or misattributed parentage (MPE, NPE, donor conceived, etc.)

# Seven Tips for getting effective DNA results:

- Due to the way DNA is inherited, it is best if you test your oldest living relatives first
- Test as many family members as you can... testing aunts, uncles and cousins from the different branches of your tree will help you sort through your matches more easily
- Build out your family tree as far back as you can go and also as far down to the present day as possible. Including your collateral relatives in your family tree and their descendants will help you identify your living matches
- In order to avoid contamination, do not eat or drink anything for at least one hour before taking a DNA test
- Many elderly people have trouble making enough saliva for “spit” tests, which often results in a failed test. Use an [alternate testing method](#) using cheek swabs, distilled water and saline solution to get around this problem
- To cover the most ground, test and/or upload your results to the four major testing companies (Ancestry, 23andMe, FamilyTreeDNA, and MyHeritage)
- Always prepare yourself (and anyone you ask to test) for the unexpected. Asking your relatives if they want to know about any surprises *before* they test is critical to avoiding any uncomfortable situations

Most professionals agree that ethnicity estimates are accurate down to the continental level only. That is why you will get varying ethnicity percentages depending on which company you test with.

Of course there are exceptions, and if you truly do get results that are way off the mark, then you may want to consult with a professional genealogist.

DNA tests are not a silver bullet. Traditional genealogical research is still required to reach valid conclusions.

## Benefits of working with a professional genealogist:

- We can help decipher your results in a way that is understandable and also meaningful
- We know the “ins and outs” of DNA testing and can save you time, money and unnecessary heartache
- Different companies and tests abound, and depending on your situation you may only need to test with one company, or you may need to take several tests with several different companies

If you are interested in exploring your genetic roots further, please contact us at [greg@fortwick.com](mailto:greg@fortwick.com) and we'll be glad to help you get the most out of your DNA test results.