

Genetic Lifehacks

Learn. Experiment. Optimize.

Hi everyone,

My goal for this year has been *radical transparency*. Yep – it's a buzzword that I saw somewhere and decided to adopt.

So here goes some transparency:

- Genetic Lifehacks is fully supported by your membership subscriptions and by people who order consultation reports along with a membership.
- I do my best to write about the genetic-related research that has high quality studies to back it up. Yes, I likely falter on this point, and my weakness is not having enough knowledge to fully assess the statistical methods used in some research studies.
- Every article is referenced with links directly to the research. One of the statistics that I look at periodically is how many people click on links to the papers that I reference. On any given day, my readers click through to the research papers between 200–300 times. That, to me, is the best indicator of the quality of my readers.
- My "team": I do have a virtual assistant who works part-time. She edits out my excessive use of passive voice, checks all the links and rs ids, posts on social media, and keeps the website orderly behind the scenes. With a BS in Biology and experience teaching, she does a great job of telling me when an article topic needs more explanations added to it.

It struck me this past week that as a part of radical transparency, I should explain what I know about the genetics reports industry in a way that is above board and factual.

"Follow the money" is a saying that holds true in so many circumstances. From crime-solving to political actions to business endeavors.... looking at who gains financially is often enlightening.

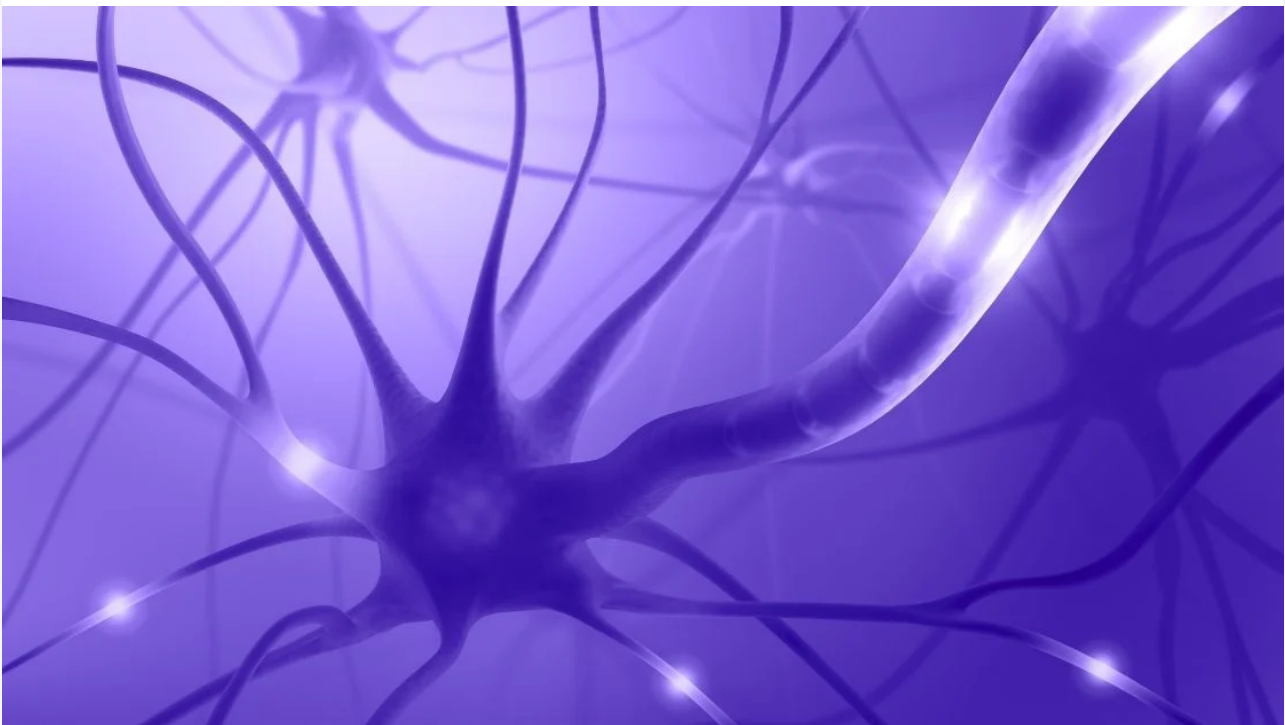
- AncestryDNA and 23andMe are the [largest companies](#) in the direct-to-consumer DNA testing game. AncestryDNA has about 20 million users and 23andMe about 12 million users.
- AncestryDNA recently was acquired by the [Blackstone Group](#) for \$4.7 billion. Blackstone Group is a massive private equity company involved in companies ranging from health care to insurance to oil to hotels – and now genetics.
- 23andMe recently [partnered with investors](#), including Richard Branson, in a deal that values the company at \$3.5 billion. They are now a publicly-traded company.

- Promethease and SNPedia were [purchased by MyHeritage](#) in 2019. Included in the sale were their users' genetic data.
- SelfDecode has received [seed funding](#) from several sources, including an undisclosed amount a few weeks ago from [Knockout Capital](#), a hedge fund that “invests in high growth companies as private markets fuel public sentiment.” (I've read that sentence multiple times and am not sure what it really means.)

Radical transparency: I have no plans to seek outside funding in order to grow Genetic Lifehacks. I'm happy with being able to write what I want and only answer to you, my members, instead of a board of directors.

I'm very grateful for all of you,

~Debbie



[Member's Only Article!](#)

Genetic risk and Guillain-Barré syndrome

Our immune system is amazingly powerful, protecting us against known and unknown foreign invaders. Occasionally, things go awry, and autoimmune diseases, such as Guillain-Barré syndrome, can occur.

This article dives into the research on Guillain-Barré syndrome, explaining the course of the disease, and covering the genetic variants that increase the relative risk of this serious autoimmune disease.

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What I've been reading:

1) [Is drinking coffee protective against COVID-19?](#)

A UK epidemiological study on dietary habits and SARS-CoV-2 infection found a link between coffee consumption and positive test results. The results showed a 10% reduction in COVID positivity in people who drink 2-3 cups of coffee a day. One problem with epidemiological studies is that we don't know if coffee consumption prevents infection, or if there is something else going on that causes the correlation. Perhaps people who drink coffee in the morning are working a daytime job and thus going to bed at a reasonable hour instead of hitting the pubs at night?

The study also found that people whose vegetable consumption was in the third quartile were at a 12% lower risk of COVID positivity. So this means that people who eat more vegetables than half the population - but fewer vegetables than the top 25% of the population - are in some way slightly protected from COVID? Better get your veggie consumption just right while drinking 2-3 cups of coffee per day.

I would take these results with a cup of tea..

In the meantime, check out [your coffee genes](#) :-)

2) [Insulin directly regulates the circadian clock in adipose tissue](#)

Recent research shows that timing of meals - and timing of not eating - is important in metabolic health. This study takes that concept one step further and explains that in adipose (fat) cell, insulin is the regulator of the circadian clock.

If you are interested in going further on this topic, another [recent study](#) used an animal model to show how meal timing impacts circadian rhythm. In this study - a breakfast skipping model - the delay in normal feeding caused a

dysfunction in the circadian rhythm between liver fat synthesis and adipose tissue.

If you are wondering how your circadian rhythm genes impact weight, check out the [Weight Loss Report](#) and look for genes marked with the moon icon.

Genetic Lifehacks

Cameron, MT

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