

# Genetic Lifehacks

Learn. Experiment. Optimize.

Hi everyone,

My biggest hurdle in growing and promoting Genetic Lifehacks is that very few people even think about how their genes impact their health. It's hard to reach an audience when no one is looking for the information you provide :-)

Often when I try to explain what I do for a living, people look at me like I'm crazy. "You do what?" While most people know that some diseases have a hereditary component, the connection to using genetic information to prevent disease is not often thought about.

To me, there is one easy example that stands out on using genetic data to prevent a disease...

The genetic mutation that causes hemochromatosis is fairly common in people who have an ancestor from Northern Europe. Hemochromatosis is the resulting disease from too much iron building up in the body due to a mutation in the HFE gene. Excess iron can initially lead to joint pain, fatigue, and depression. Continued iron overload can cause diabetes, heart problems, and liver failure at a relatively early age.

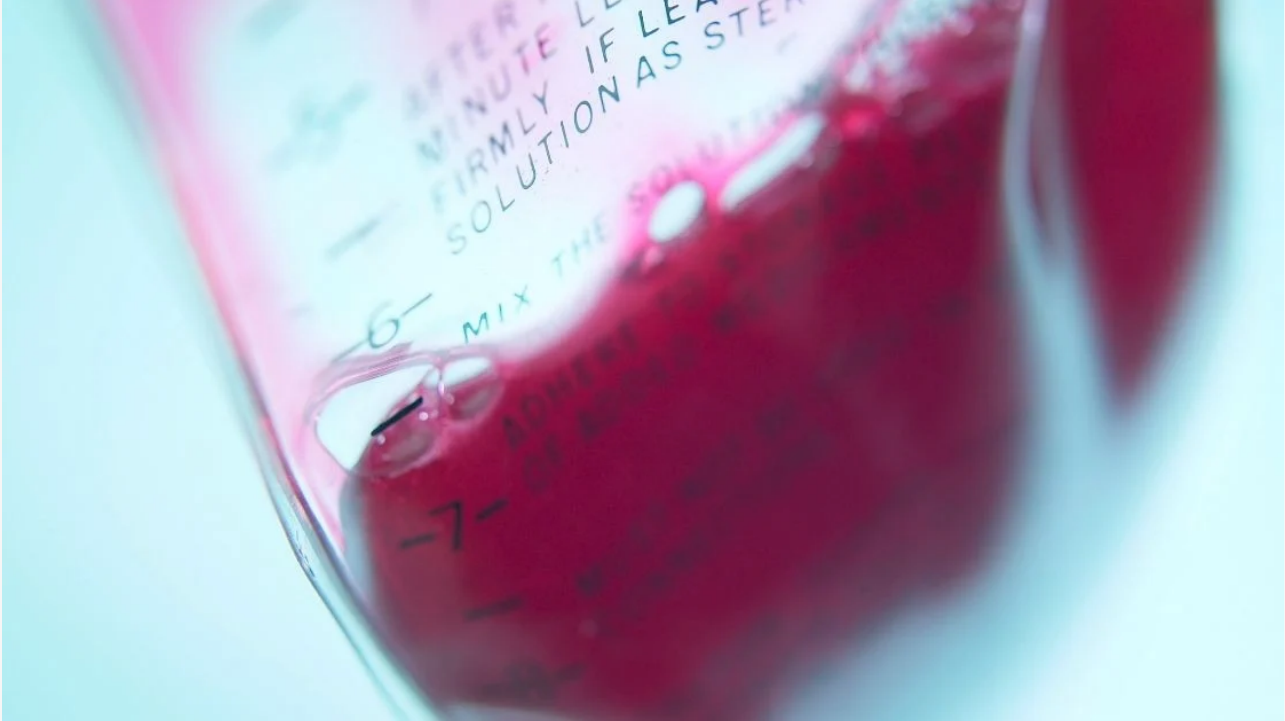
Simply put, knowing that you carry a mutation for hemochromatosis (and acting on it) can prevent decades of chronic disease suffering and add years to your life.

Do me a favor - if you haven't yet checked your genetic data for the hemochromatosis mutations in the HFE gene, go and do so today. I've heard from multiple readers who have discovered the mutation, tested and found high iron, and are now actively preventing iron overload.

If you know someone who has 23andMe or AncestryDNA data, please pass this newsletter along and encourage them to read the hemochromatosis article.

Grateful for all of you,

Debbie Moon



## Building Up Iron: Hemochromatosis mutations

Hemochromatosis is a fairly common genetic disease that causes iron to build up in the body. Knowledge is power here! Knowing that you carry the genetic variants for hemochromatosis can **literally add years to your life** since you can prevent the buildup of iron by being a blood donor.

23andMe and AncestryDNA genetic data can tell you if you likely carry the more common genetic mutations in the HFE gene for hemochromatosis. First, an explanation of iron in the body, and then I'll explain how to check your genetic data to see if you carry the HFE mutations. Finally, I'll explain testing options and ways to decrease high iron levels.

### What is hemochromatosis?

Hemochromatosis is the disease state of building up too much iron in the body. It can be caused by genetic mutations in iron-related genes, or it can be due to excessive blood transfusions for anemia or liver disease.

Iron is essential - but needs to be in just the right amount. People with hereditary hemochromatosis absorb more iron from food than they should due to genetic variants.

[Read the article and check your genes...](#)

## What I've Been Reading...

### 1) [Rogue antibodies involved in almost one-fifth of COVID deaths](#)

This article in Nature covers a couple of very interesting research studies showing that around 20% of people who die of COVID have self-targeting antibodies that attack interferon (immune system's virus fighter). The article explains that the autoantibodies were found in only 0.18% of healthy volunteers under the age of 70, but that the autoantibodies rise dramatically in people age 70-79 and then 80+.

### 2) [New Non-Hormonal Target May Signal the End of Painful Periods](#)

While the title is a bit misleading, the new endometriosis research described in the article is interesting. Researchers have discovered through genetic analysis that mutations in the neuropeptide S receptor 1 (NPSR1) gene are linked to endometriosis. Inhibitors of NPSR1 may be able to reduce endometriosis pain.

### 3) [How Private Is My VPN](#)

The Markup investigates the hidden trackers in a number of popular VPN apps. Worth reading if you use a VPN regularly.

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## Genetic Lifehacks

Cameron, MT

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