

## Should a baby have its genome sequenced?

Olly and Lily are expecting their first child. The baby, currently known as 'Bump', is scheduled to be born by caesarean section on the 1st of March. Angie, Lily's midwife, is running through the paperwork in preparation for the birth and asks the couple if they would like Bump's genome sequenced.

Angie explains that along with being weighed, measured and having a heel prick test, a simple swab taken at birth will reveal Bump's genetic background, indicating the various conditions he or she may or may not be at risk of developing. The results will be presented on an ID card and will form part of Bump's medical records. Olly thinks it's a great idea but Lily is concerned that the information revealed could lead to discrimination and inequality later in life.

### Should Olly and Lily have their baby's genome sequenced at birth?

What if the test shows that there are problems? If they need to show this ID card for everything, my poor child might get shunted out. If you were going to give out a university place or a job to someone, you would choose the healthiest one wouldn't you? Not the one that you know might develop a disease.



Lily  
(Bump's mum)



Angie  
(the midwife)



Olly  
(Bump's dad)

More and more parents are opting for the test. It means that parents can be prepared for, and avoid, any health issues that may develop later in life. Lots of mums worry about it, but it's perfectly safe and painless.

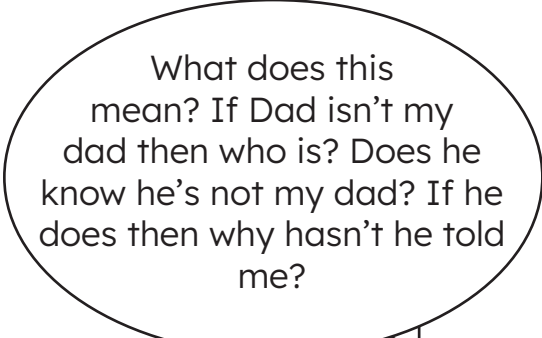
It's a great idea! It will revolutionise healthcare. Doctors can just check the patient's records and know every kind of treatment they might need further down the line. It will also mean we will be aware of any issues our child might face in the future and make better decisions to overcome them.

## Andy's unexpected paternity results

Last year Andy bought himself an online genotyping kit. The results were kind of fun; no big shocks, just a couple of things that made his friends laugh. Last Christmas Andy decided to have some more fun and bought a testing kit for his father, George. Andy had to take his father through the whole genotyping process and was surprised how long it took to explain the basics.

Going through the results together, Andy noticed that there were some major differences between markers on the Y chromosomes of the two men. This was a shock, as the only explanation is that George is not Andy's biological father. Andy asked his sister, Kate, about this and she just got really angry. Naturally, George didn't spot the differences and wouldn't recognise their importance if he did. Andy's mum died a few years ago, so he can't ask her about it.

### Should Andy tell his father the result?



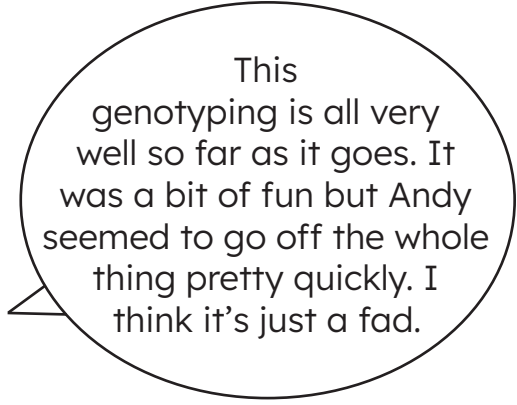
What does this mean? If Dad isn't my dad then who is? Does he know he's not my dad? If he does then why hasn't he told me?



Andy



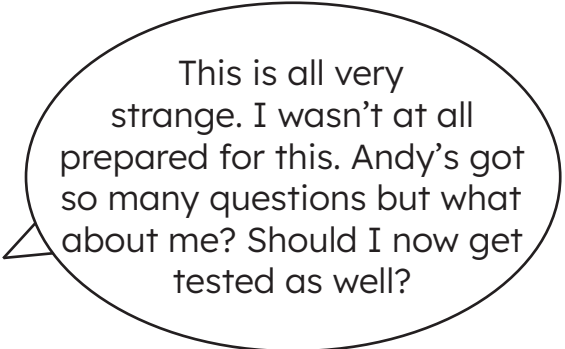
George  
(Andy's father)



This genotyping is all very well so far as it goes. It was a bit of fun but Andy seemed to go off the whole thing pretty quickly. I think it's just a fad.



Kate  
(Andy's sister)



This is all very strange. I wasn't at all prepared for this. Andy's got so many questions but what about me? Should I now get tested as well?