Question/Chat Log Getting Started with Genealogy and DNA
Saturday, January 13, 2018

Nancy: What is ISOGG?

> **ANSWER:** International Society of Genetic Genealogy https://isogg.org/

Steve: Why are the AncestryDNA so much higher?

> **ANSWER:** Assuming the AncestryDNA percentages on the ISOGG "Missing Cousins" chart are accurate, it's possible that their algorithm for matching people is better than the other companies' algorithms.

Harlen: If I send my data from one company to another, can I get a higher accuracy in finding matches? Or I need to take another test?

> **ANSWER:** There should be no need to take another test with a company if it was an autosomal DNA test.

Katherine: My brother had to redo the test 4 times. He has dentures and they suggested that he do it first thing in the morning BEFORE he did anything with his dentures.

> **ANSWER:** This is not uncommon and a reputable company will send you another test to re-administer at no charge.

Katherine: What kind of cost is involved in sending a test from one company to another?

> **ANSWER:** There are no costs to upload your data to most companies such as Living DNA and MyHeritage. Family Tree DNA has a free upload but charges $19 USD to access specific features including their chromosome browser.

Nancy: If DNA companies only compare results with other samples they have received, isn't it important to know which company receives the most samples?

> **ANSWER:** Yes. Right now Ancestry DNA is the leader with over 6 million tests completed.

Bev: What about transferring from Family Tree DNA to Ancestry? What about accuracy?

> **ANSWER:** Ancestry does NOT accept DNA test data uploads from other DNA testing companies.

Denise: Privacy issue: My brother tested with AncestryDNA for me and I am the manager. He doesn't care about his results. How would handle uploading his results to GEDmatch if he doesn't care?

> **ANSWER:** As long as he approved of uploading his DNA results to GEDmatch (and he has been informed of the pros and cons), then I would do this for him under your account.

Jerry: What is the $19

> **ANSWER:** $19 is the "upcharge" fee to access extra features at Family Tree DNA once you've upload your DNA test data from another company.

Marie: If you test with one company and also upload your data from another company, are they kept separate or do they merge the results?

> **ANSWER:** Results are kept separate. Usually, as in the case with uploading your DNA test data to MyHeritage, you can select which set of results to view. Results from different DNA testing companies are never "merged."

Katherine: I have done all of my kits with Ancestry and I had someone reach out to me saying they were a 4th to 6th cousin and how were we related. Luckily one of the names she gave me was niggling at me and I have a 2-vol family history for my maternal grandfather's side of the family. I found the name in there and was able to tell her. She did NOT have that name in her tree and I did NOT have her close relatives in my tree. The match was a little further back than that.

> **ANSWER:** Great! This is why it is important to have a tree on the DNA testing website and build it out as far back and as wide as possible.

Colleen: So the only way to get DNA results/info from my father's mother, I would need my father or one of his maternal cousins to test, correct?

> **ANSWER:** Your father's mother is your paternal grandmother. Roughly 25% of your autosomal DNA (atDNA) is from her. Therefore, you could test your own autosomal DNA or that of your father's (if he's alive).
>
> For your paternal grandmother's *mitochondrial* DNA, you could test your father's mtDNA (if he's still alive) or any of his siblings' mtDNA. If none of them are alive, then you could test the mtDNA of any children of your father's sisters. They would've received your paternal grandma's mtDNA.

Katherine: So if I am trying to find my great-grandfather on my mom's line, I would need the autosomal to be able to access both sides of the family?

> **ANSWER:** Yes use autosomal DNA, unless you can find a direct Y-line descendant of his. Otherwise, I would do both autosomal DNA and Y-DNA.

Katherine: But I thought that Y-DNA could only be done on a male and not on a female?

> **ANSWER:** Correct. So in the case of a female, you would need a brother or other male relative on the father's side to test.

Natalie: But if it's paternal line, mitochondrial (yours) won't work. You would have to find known descendants of each wife to test, right?

> **ANSWER:** Correct.

Phyllis: Please define haplo-group

> **ANSWER:** From the ISOGG Wiki at https://isogg.org/wiki/Haplogroup: A haplogroup is a genetic population group of people who share a common ancestor on the patriline or the matriline. Haplogroups are assigned letters of the alphabet, and refinements consist of additional number and letter combinations.

Linda: I can't find my gt grandfather on my mothers side do I test my brothers Y Dna

> **ANSWER:** No; your brothers have your dad's Y-DNA. Therefore, autosomal is your only option. Don't worry, it might work and oftentimes is more effective than Y-DNA. For this to work, matches need to be ruled out as belonging to known lines. It will also help to test cousins who are related through this unknown person—and/or to identify matches who might be descendants of this unknown person. If possible, test your mother or one of her siblings, as they are one generation closer to the mystery and will have stronger matches than you and people in your generation.

Colleen: How would we know what haplogroup? Is that part of our results?

> **ANSWER:** 23andMe and at Family Tree DNA report your basic Y-DNA (if you have a Y-chromosome) and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) haplogroups. Ancestry does not provide haplogroup information. LivingDNA reports Y-DNA and mtDNA haplogroups. MyHeritage intends to report these haplogroups in the near future as well.

Katherine: So if I wanted to find my mom's great-grandfather, I would have to test a direct line male from that family. My brother would NOT work, because that would take me back along our dad's family's line? Correct??

> **ANSWER:** Correct.

Phyllis: If I'm a female and import Ancestry data to Family Tree, will I still get Y-DNA information?

> **ANSWER:** No. You can't extract Y-DNA from DNA test results for a female testing subject.

Cindy: So, knowing one's haplogroup would be helpful in excluding genetic relationships, but doesn't really get you close enough to be helpful in determining close relationships.

> **ANSWER:** Correct

Denise: Is there value in testing half-cousins?

> **ANSWER:** Yes! For a full-1st cousin, you share two grandparents. In contrast, half-1st cousins share only one grandparent. Anyone that matches both you and that half-1st cousin **must** be from the line of the shared grandparent. In contrast, you could only assign shared matches with a full-1st cousin to either your maternal side or paternal side (depending on which side that cousin is on). Thus, a half-1st cousin lets you pinpoint an ancestors line more precisely. This is also true for half-2nd cousins (sharing only one of two great-grandparents) and so on.

Colleen: How does DNA tell you anything about where people lived?

> **ANSWER:** Although there are haplogroup migration routes, there is debate about the accuracy PLUS much of the information goes back millions of years.

Jim: Does Living DNA Britain include Scotland?

> **ANSWER:** Yes.

Henriette: I transferred my 23andme raw data to Family Tree DNA. If I wanted to upgrade to a full mtDNA test, would I need to submit an actual test, or could they use the transferred data they have on hand for me?

> **ANSWER:** You would need to take the mtDNA test at Family Tree DNA.

Katherine: Do you have to have memberships with those other companies in order to have them be useful? I have my tree on Ancestry, but if I transferred to MyHeritage, would I also have to have a paid membership to have matches from there be useful?

> **ANSWER:** You do NOT need a membership at MyHeritage to connect with matches.

Kelly: If you test with Living tree DNA now will you get your matches in august or will you need to retest again

> **ANSWER:** No need to retest. You can test now and wait for matching in August. You should get your results in about 12 weeks.

Melva: If we want the geographical matches for Ireland, do we need to test with Living DNA and do they test in America?

> **ANSWER:** Living DNA based in the UK does sell to the US market and they have the breakdown on Irish ethnicity by region.

Colleen: Wish I had known about AncestryByDNA before we tested my husband, who wanted to know his ethnicity, but not connect with his bio family (he's adopted). Is the AncestryByDNA accurate so to speak in ethnicity?

> **ANSWER:** Many have reported that the AncestryByDNA results deviate wildly from results from the other major DNA testing companies.

Patricia: Is anyone else having trouble transferring Ancestry to FTDNA. My daughter and I both have tried and it will not accept it. Test in Dec 2017

> **ANSWER:** http://www.mapmy23.com/tools/ancestry_ftdna_fix.php this is what will make the newer tests (since around summer 2017) work for FTDNA upload

Patti: My dad and my brother have both passed away. My brother has one son. What test is best to send to him so we don't lost information for YDNA? Should I do FamilyTree's YDNA test and which level is best to do?

> **ANSWER:** If you're concerned about your father's Y-DNA, then send your nephew a Y-DNA kit from FT-DNA. You can start at 37 markers and upgrade the test at a later date (assuming there's a sufficient DNA sample in their storage). Or you can start at the full Y-111 test.

Denise: Where can we learn about what the letters means in Haplogroups?

> **ANSWER:** ISOGG Wiki at https://isogg.org/wiki/Haplogroup:

Jerry: My sisters did the mtDNA Will the haplogroup on their report be my haplogroup?

> **ANSWER:** Yes, siblings sharing a mother will have the same mtDNA haplogroup. However, there can be differences if there's a heteroplasmy, which is a mutation in process. I believe this is fairly rare, however.

Pamela: I missed some of the first hour....will the recording be available later?

> **ANSWER:** Yes, recordings will be available within 24 hours & probably later today.

BREAK

Marie: How do you filter out the matches (esp. on Ancestry) to narrow your search from the thousands of matches that I have? If I try to sort by a surname from my father's side, I also get matches that are clearly from my mother's side?

ANSWER: There's no easy way to sort maternal and paternal matches unless one of your parents has tested at the company where you tested. You can use a combination of surnames, locations, ethnicities to separate your matches. Also, once you identify a match as being either maternal or paternal, then their shared matches with you should also be on that side—however, sometimes our matches are related through multiple lines and could be both maternal and paternal.

To physically separate matches, I create spreadsheets using DNA Client from DNAGedcom.com. You'll never have all of your matches figured out; however, it ispossible to keep track of the important ones. DNA Client works for Ancestry, 23andMe, and Family Tree Magazine results.

Also, MedBetter DNA allows you to add HASHTAGS to your Ancestry notes. For example, #COMMON ANCESTOR = MAE SMITH + JOHN JONES. You then can sort your matches based on your hashtags. See https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/medbetterdna/gnbpjempamffbpppblmabeeimkppenla?hl=en-US

Phyllis: Sorry, I was briefly distracted when Mary went over #1 of Recommendations on page 3. Do you recommend first doing autosomal DNA on Ancestry OR 23and Me?

ANSWER: Ancestry's test is recommended to do first since it has the largest database of those tested and is better for matches. 23andMe is better if you want to align results with the paper trail of your research.

Edward: My father shows 49% West and Central Europe but mine came back as 0 % I would have thought I would have had some transfer down to me. Both tests were done at Family Tree DNA and one month apart.

ANSWER: If you tested your father and yourself at the same company, you'd expect roughly one half of his DNA. But if you tested at different companies, since company estimates vary, you cannot expect this. Also, Ancestry gives ethnicity estimates in ranges. So, if his 49% is actually 20 to 65%, and it's at the lower end, then halving a small number could result in 0%.

Colleen: So my Irish percentage was 38%. I expected it to be much higher since 3 out of my 4 grandparents have no known origin to date outside of Ireland. My brothers' result might show a higher level of Irish than me because of the differences in DNA they inherited?

ANSWER: Recombination (and therefore inheriting different amounts) could account for this. Also, maybe your missing Irishness is showing up as Great Britain or a related region.

Linda: In Ancestry I am 56% British 10% Scandinavian on MyHeritage I have 53% Scandinavian and 23% British? The MyHeritage results were based on an import of the Ancestry data.

> **ANSWER:** I don't know how good the MyHeritage ethnicity estimates are or whether they're talking about the same time period as Ancestry. Also, Ancestry reports in ranges, so check that. It's not unlikely that the same data imported to another company will generate different results. Each company has its own reference panel and they have their own algorithm.

Nancy: Why did Ancestry identify Ireland/Scotland/Wales separately from Great Britain?

> **ANSWER:** Good question! These two categories at Ancestry overlap, with the Great Britain category including England, Scotland, and Wales. Their Ireland/Scotland and Wales category has subcategories like Ulster, Ireland, which in turn have their own subcategories. I don't know why there is this overlap.

Jerry: Mary mentioned a new app for analyzing chromosomes. What is name?

> **ANSWER:** MedBetter DNA
> https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/medbetterdna/gnbpjempamffbpppblmabeeimkppenla?hl=en-US

Katherine: Have to ask . . . how do you have a 3/4 sibling (shows in notes section on DNA Detectives Statistics Chart)?

> **ANSWER:** Siblings who share one parent, with their other parent either being siblings of each other—or parent/child of each other. For example, a man has children with wife 1, who dies. Then he marries her sister and has a 2nd family. With offspring, this can create horizontal three-quarter siblings.
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> Or a woman has children with Husband #1. He dies and then she marries and has children with Husband #1's father (Husband #2). This creates vertical three-quarter siblings
>
> Those three-quarter siblings will share less DNA than full siblings (they share 50%) and more than half siblings (they share 25%). Those ¾ siblings share 37.5% of their DNA.

Steve: What is a double first cousin?

> **ANSWER:** When two siblings from Family 1 have children with two siblings from Family 2. The resulting offspring from Family 1 will share as much DNA with a Family 2 sibling as half-siblings share (25%).

Steve: In Ancestry after clicking on the "i" it shows how many centimorgans are shared across a certain number of DNA segments. Is that second number important?

> **ANSWER:** I usually don't pay attention to the number of segments (the second number). However, I have used this number when handling DNA matches from **endogamous** populations (that is, where a closed group of families intermarried over hundreds of years). In this instance, I've taken the total amount of shared DNA and divided it by the number of segments. This produces the average size of the DNA segments. I then looked for matches where the resulting number was over 20. For example, if the total amount of shared DNA was 220 cm with 10 segments, then the average segment would be 22 cm. These larger segments indicate a closer relationship with a relatively recent shared ancestor. In contrast, if the DNA is broken into a lot of small segments, like 12 cm, this indicates more generations since the most recent common ancestor (because of recombination).

Katherine: Is there a "common" spreadsheet out there or have you each developed your own for analyzing the DNA matches?

> **ANSWER:** DNA GEDCOM - DNA Client
> https://www.dnagedcom.com/doc/welcome-to-the-dnagedcom-client/

Steve: How do you share, for example, your Ancestry results with other companies?

> **ANSWER:** Steve I just created a post on this:
> https://abundantgenealogy.com/dna-download-uploading-dna-test-data/