

YOUR DNA AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

What is DNA?

DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) is present in most cells of the human body and can be described as the genetic make-up of the body. DNA governs physical characteristics such as eye colour, hair colour etc. However the DNA profiling techniques used within the Criminal justice system only analyse 'non-coding' or 'junk' areas of the DNA which are not linked to these characteristics. Everyone's DNA is unique except in the case of identical twins, this uniqueness makes it an ideal tool for investigations. DNA is abundant in saliva and cells from the mouth, blood, and hair roots. Therefore one of these samples is taken when sampling DNA from individuals in custody suites within the MPS.

What is the difference between DNA sample and DNA profile?

A DNA sample is the physical sample of DNA either during collection, or in solution during the laboratory processing stage. The product of the analysis of the sample within the laboratory is a series of 20 numbers. Each number represents a DNA component. The series of numbers is known as your DNA profile.

How is my DNA Profile Produced?

Buccal swab (Cheek cells), Blood, Hair sample

Forensic Service Providers process the sample by adding various chemicals to release the DNA into a solution, the amount of DNA present is measured, and each DNA component is represented by a numerical designation.

A DNA profile is generated - This is a series of 20 numbers each representing a component of DNA. These numbers are uploaded to the National DNA Database (NDNAD).

Why is my DNA being taken?

Your DNA is being taken because:-

- You have been arrested for a recordable offence (PACE)
- You have been examined under schedule 7 of the terrorism Act 2000. (TACT)
- You are providing a volunteer sample for an investigation / to be retained until required (VOLUNTEER)

Where/how long will my DNA sample and profile be stored, and how can I get it removed?

	PACE/TACT	Volunteer (Elimination sample)	Volunteer (e.g Vulnerable Person sample / Missing Person)
DNA Sample Retention	The DNA sample is retained indefinitely.*	Sample destroyed after DNA profile is obtained or 3 months after the completion of the case.	Sample destroyed after DNA Profile is obtained.
DNA Profile Retention	Profile stored indefinitely on the NDNAD.*	Not stored on any Database	Profile stored on separate National Databases.
Removal of profile and sample	Consideration for removal to be sent to: The Exceptional Cases Unit, NSY, 10 Broadway, London SW1H 0BG	N/A	All profiles reviewed bi-annually / or when the enquiry is complete. Removal can be sought through writing to Senior Investigating Officer.

*(To be reviewed with the introduction of the Protection of Freedom Bill)

Who has access to my information?

The Forensic Service Providers receive the samples anonymised, and therefore do not hold any of your personal information, except the series of numbers that constitute your DNA profile.

The MPS holds information including your name, date of birth, but does not hold your DNA profile.

The NDNAD stores information such as Name, Date of Birth and your DNA profile.

All information held on any database is restricted and only a small number of security cleared staff have access to the restricted computer systems holding this information.

Who has knowledge of my DNA information?

The MPS, the NDNAD, and some legal professionals involved in a specific case may have knowledge/ or require information concerning your DNA Profile.

All individuals should always be informed why a DNA sample has been taken from them.

For further information please visit:

www.met.police.uk
www.npia.police.uk
www.mpa.gov.uk
www.cps.gov.uk