



San Mateo County Fire Prevention Officers Section

Homemade DNA Kit

DNA can be used by law enforcement to identify missing or lost children or missing adults who suffer from Alzheimer's disease. The DNA could also be used to identify unknown deceased persons or persons involved in major disasters, by comparing the deceased's DNA with a DNA sample taken previously.

Collecting DNA of family members can be simple and inexpensive. If a situation arises and law enforcement needs DNA of a family member, give this kit to them. The following instructions came from Special Agent Joseph Errera, a forensic expert at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. The DNA sample will keep for many years. Please carefully follow all instructions.

You will need:

- (2) heavy duty zip lock freezer bags
- Latex gloves
- (4) Q-tip type swabs
- Fingernail clipper
- 3 sheets of white paper (8 1/2 x 11)

- Cut 20 or so head hairs close to the scalp and wrap in paper. (You do not need the hair root)
- Clip fingernails and wrap in paper
- To collect buccal cell samples from inside the person's mouth:
 1. Make sure the person doesn't eat or drink anything for 30 minutes prior to taking the sample
 2. Wear Latex gloves
 3. Take 2 samples from each cheek. Collect the sample by rolling the swab around inside the cheek for about 10 seconds. Place on paper to air dry (30-60 minutes)
 4. Place 4 dried Q-tips inside zip-lock bag
- Place hair samples, fingernails and Q-tip bag inside the second zip-lock bag
- Label bags with: the person's name, date of collection and the name of the person who took the sample
- Store in freezer