

Off-the-shelf genetics tests to hit US pharmacies

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This undated illustration shows the DNA double helix. Biotech firm Pathway Genomics announced Tuesday that personalized DNA tests to detect the risks of developing certain diseases will soon be available at Walgreens, a large chain of pharmacies.

Want to find out what diseases await you in the future, your chances of developing Alzheimer's? Or whether you will pass something on to your child? Then a trip to the pharmacy may reveal all.

Biotech firm Pathway Genomics announced Tuesday that personalized DNA tests to detect the risks of developing certain diseases will soon be available at Walgreens, a large chain of pharmacies.

It would be the first time that such tests would be commercially available

for consumers, even though the company has offered them online for some time.

The Pathway Genomics kit, dubbed the "Insight Saliva Collection," enables the user to take saliva swabs following simple instructions and send them off to a California laboratory for analysis.

Costing between 20 to 30 dollars, the kit will be on sale at some 7,500 branches of Walgreens from the weekend, except those in New York state, due to local laws.

After sending off the swab, the customer has to log onto the Pathway Genomics site and create a personal account to order the tests they are interested in, out of three proposed sets costing up to 249 dollars.

By analyzing the client's DNA, the company can test for markers which could indicate whether the person is at risk for about 70 diseases, including breast or [prostate cancer](#), heart disease, diabetes or [rheumatoid arthritis](#).

They can also test for responses to drugs such as anti-cholesterol medication, the anti-coagulant [warfarin](#) or tamoxifen used to battle [breast cancer](#).

Couples can also spend 179 dollars if they wish to know whether they risk passing on hereditary diseases such as [cystic fibrosis](#) to their future children.

"Everyone has the right to know the secrets hidden within their own DNA," the company says on its website.

"With personal [DNA testing](#), you can take preventative steps to improve your future, and even extend your life."

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