



DNA testing delivers important discoveries for all dogs

🐾 Wednesday, April 24, 2019 - 4:44pm



April 25 is National DNA Day, a holiday celebrating the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003 and the discovery of DNA's double helix in 1953.

Adam Boyko, assistant professor in biomedical sciences at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine and co-founder of [Embark](#), is an expert on canine genomics and has uncovered the genetic basis for many dog diseases and traits. He says by knowing your dog's genetic risks, you are better able to keep them healthy.

Boyko says:

"DNA testing can help dogs in many ways. By knowing specific genetic risks, owners and veterinarians can be proactive in keeping a dog healthy. If a dog's DNA test result shows a risk of hyperuricosuria (HUU), owners should make sure the dog has a low-purine diet and lots of water to prevent the occurrence of bladder stones. Without a DNA test, a dog fed a regular diet will very likely develop stones, which is a painful and costly condition.

"DNA testing is particularly useful for dog breeders in identifying appropriate mates to avoid producing unhealthy litters and unnecessary inbreeding. It's also proving to be a boon for researchers.

"As more and more dogs are tested, more and more genetic discoveries are made. The hope is that as dog DNA testing grows – like human DNA testing has – we'll learn the genetic basis of many important canine diseases, including cancer and hip dysplasia, and be able to provide actionable genetic testing to reduce the prevalence of these disorders."