



**CENTER FOR HUMAN
IDENTIFICATION**

How DNA Technology is used to find our Missing Indigenous Relatives

Mark Pooley
Director of Investigative Support
Center for Human Identification (CHI)
University of North Texas Health Science Center

Who is CHI?

- The Center for Human Identification (CHI) is located on the campus of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth and is accredited by ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB)
- CHI's scope of accreditation includes the following activities: biological screening and DNA testing, including autosomal STR, Y chromosome STR, mitochondrial DNA and SNP testing.

How many DNA labs (public/private) are in the United States?

- There are approximately 600+ labs in the US
- There are 205 CODIS participating labs

What is CODIS?

CODIS is the acronym for the Combined DNA Index System and is the generic term used to describe the FBI's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases as well as the software used to run these databases.

The National DNA Index System or NDIS is considered one part of CODIS, the national level, containing the DNA profiles contributed by federal, state, and local participating forensic laboratories.

Most labs do two types of DNA testing for identification:

- Short Tandem Repeat (STR) – most commonly used
- Y-STR (Paternal)

There is a third type of testing not commonly used among DNA labs

- Mitochondria (Mito) – This testing is best utilized for degraded remains & distant maternal relationships

Of the 205 CODIS participating labs, how many of these labs can do all three types of DNA testing?

1. CHI – Center for Human Identification
2. FBI
3. CA DOJ
4. NYC
5. MN

(At this time, CHI is the only lab that is doing a national outreach program for Indigenous Missing Person Cases)

What is the process to find our
Missing indigenous Relatives?

First, we work with Medical Examiner's Office (MEO)

- Where were the remains found?
- Does the MEO believe the remains to be Indigenous?
- Discuss what the MEO has done in their investigation and if DNA testing is needed.

Second, we work with Law Enforcement (Tribal, Local, State, & Federal)

- Who is missing?
- How long have they been missing?
- Where was the missing person last seen?
- Does law enforcement want to use DNA testing to assist in their missing person case?

Third, if the family of the missing person agrees to voluntarily provide a DNA sample, the following will be done:

1. A written consent will be signed by the donor
2. Law Enforcement or Medical Examiner's Officer will collect a buccal swab from the donor's mouth
3. The buccal swab will be sent to the DNA lab for a profile to be created - this profile is called a "Family Reference Sample" (FRS)
4. The FRS is then entered into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System – Regulated by the FBI)

Contact Information

Mark Pooley

**Director of Investigative Support
Center for Human Identification (CHI)**

(O) 817-735-7937 (C) 480-380-7136

Mark.Pooley@unthealth.edu