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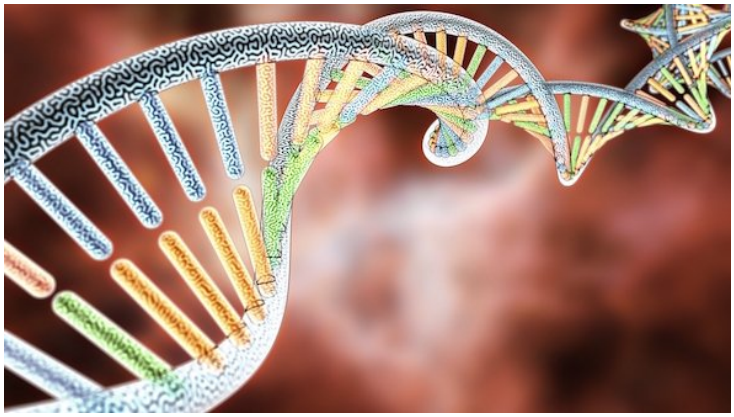
Thermo Fisher and Qatar Genome Program collaborate to advance precision medicine

May 24, 2022 | News

The collaboration includes custom genotyping arrays designed to accelerate genomic research and clinical applications of predictive genomics across Arab populations



Thermo Fisher Scientific and Qatar Genome Program (QGP), a member of Qatar Foundation (QF), have partnered with the goal of accelerating genomic research and clinical applications of predictive genomics in Qatar as a step toward expanding the benefits of precision medicine across Arab populations globally.

Under the agreement, Thermo Fisher and Qatar Genome Program will develop an Axiom custom genotyping array for pan-Arab populations using whole genome sequencing data from 19 Arab countries. The array, with about 800,000 variants, aims to help drive scientific research and insights into conditions including diabetes, cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, autism, inherited genetic disorders and cancer.

Once available through Thermo Fisher's global commercial channels in late 2022, the array is intended to provide a cost-effective alternative to whole genome sequencing for Arab populations, enabling increased diversity in large genome-wide studies.

Thermo Fisher began working with Qatar Genome Program in 2018 to establish the first microarray designed specifically for the Qatari population. The Q-Chip detects genetic alterations that increase individuals' risk of both prevalent and rare diseases. As part of the new agreement, the organizations will continue to refine algorithms and define clinically actionable content to assess polygenic risk scores, a measure of disease risk, and clinically relevant variants, including those related to pharmacogenomics.