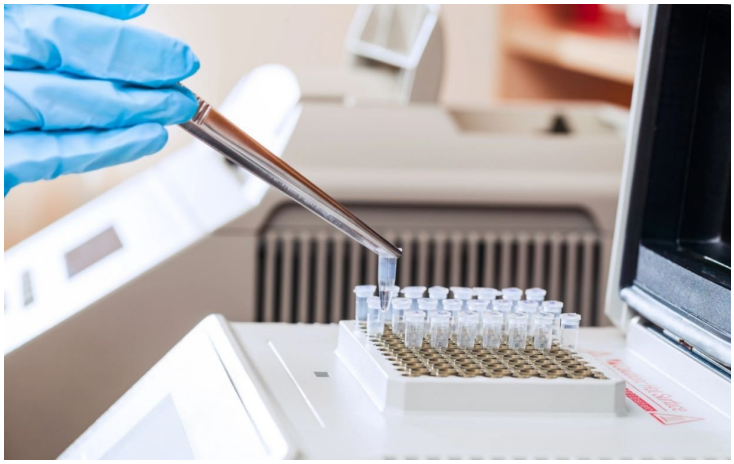
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Abu Dhabi integrates genetic testing as integral component of Premarital Screening Programme

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To prevent the transmission of genetic diseases to children and elevate early intervention



Aimed at enabling community members with insights to make informed health decisions for themselves and their families through harnessing the power of genomics, the Department of Health in Abu Dhabi (DoH), the regulator of the healthcare sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, has announced that genetic testing will become an essential part of the premarital screening in the Emirate as of October 1st, 2024.

Following the success of the pilot phase launched in 2022, and in collaboration with Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC), DoH supported over 800 Abu Dhabi-based couples who underwent genetic testing in Abu Dhabi, enabling them to make informed health decisions for their future families. Data underscores that an impressive 86% achieved genetic compatibility and only 14% required additional intervention and family planning based on genetic results.

To be considered in family planning, the comprehensive genetic screening tests for autosomal recessive 570 genes contributing to 840+ genetic disorders. Consulting with healthcare professionals and genetic counselors is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the potential risks and available treatment options.

The top common genetic disorders can lead to offspring loss of vision and hearing, blood clotting, developmental delay, organ function failure, hormonal imbalances, and seizures among others. The Department confirms that the test is offered in 22 primary care centres across Abu Dhabi, Al Dhafra and Al Ain region.