



Article Side

Paternity Testing on Dead Fathers by [Glenn Farrier](#)

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Paternity testing is not just limited to alleged fathers who are still alive. Paternity can still be determined even for an alleged father who is already dead. Depending on the country you live and if an exhumation is required, the situation can get complicated and costs can go up considerable. But let us investigate the 3 possible scenarios:

If he has just passed away, it is still possible to obtain genetic substances from his dead body. These substances can be hair samples and fingernails. Remember hair samples need to have the root attached so you will need to actually pluck them out of the body. If there is an autopsy performed the medical pathologist can actually withdraw a blood sample or collect a tissue sample.

Exhumations are usually done following a court order. In some countries it can be very difficult getting an exhumation permit, all the more if you are not legally considered a direct relative.

If the body is buried for a few days already, DNA samples can still be obtained through personal comb of the dead person (hopefully with his hair strands), his dentures, toothbrush, or even his fresh cigarette butts. This process, however, does not guarantee conclusive results because the DNA samples from these substances might not suffice.

In extreme cases, the body of the alleged father could be buried for a long time. But there is still a way to conduct a paternity test in such situation. This is done through obtaining about 2 grams of bone pieces from his skeleton or teeth. This is the most difficult and expensive among the 3 options but when all else is unavailable, the family has no other option.

Do I have any other options?

If you think you might not be able to sustain the costs or do not require going through all the hassle of paternity testing on a deceased body, you may opt for a relationship test. A relationship test can be done between the person of whom paternity is in question and blood relatives of the alleged father. Relatives must be brother, sisters or parents. Relationship testing between cousins or second degree relatives will not provide conclusive answers in most cases (although Y chromosome testing is very accurate where males seek to confirm a shared male lineage so as long as the male line is uninterrupted).

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Karl McDonald specializes in writing about paternity testing and a range of other genetic tests available. Other areas of interest include boy girl gender prediction testing, Prenatal paternity testing and a [Sibling DNA tests](#). Articles by the author can be found on the following website: a <http://www.antibodies-probes.com>

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