Question: Would hair donations be used for genetic testing?

Answer: No, donated hair is generally not used for genetic testing.

Why Donated Hair Cannot Be Used for Genetic Testing

- **Lack of Nuclear DNA:** Standard genetic testing (such as full genomic sequencing or individual identification) requires **nuclear DNA**, which is found inside the living cells of the hair root (follicle).
- **Cut Hair Has No Root:** Hair donated for wigs is cut off above the scalp, meaning the hair shaft contains no root or follicle.
- **Limited Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA):** The hair shaft itself may contain small amounts of mitochondrial DNA, which is inherited only from the maternal line and cannot uniquely identify a specific individual or provide a comprehensive genetic profile.
- **Not an Intended Purpose:** Organizations that collect hair for wigs process the hair to manufacture medical hairpieces—not to extract DNA or run genetic screens.