

Your Easy Way To Chromosomes

By Sana Nimer Abu Shihab



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These days, hardly a week goes by in the media, without mention of a remarkable advancement in the field of genetics. Cytogenetics is a branch of genetics that is concerned with the study of the structure and function of the chromosomes and their role in heredity. Every individual inherits a pair of chromosomes from each of his parents. Each cell in our body has 46 chromosomes each. Chromosomes carry genetic information in the form of genes. The genes within the chromosomes have a powerful impact on our health, either directly through chromosomal or single gene disorders or by influencing our susceptibility to disease. Cytogenetic study is performed in order to diagnose certain genetic disorders such as; congenital birth defects, mental retardation, growth and developmental delay, defects of sexual development, ambiguous genitalia, congenital defects, abnormal facial features, infertility, multiple miscarriages, amenorrhea, autism, malignancies and hematological disorders, early embryonic death, and gene mutations among others. These can be identified by chromosomal analysis and molecular cytogenetic techniques such as Fluorescent in Situ Hybridization (FISH) and Microarray, which have enormously expanded in recent years.



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Editorial Review

About the Author

I have been working as a laboratory technician for 30 years: 21 years as a biochemistry laboratory technician and 10 years as a genetics laboratory technician. I am greatful to have had the opportunity to gain experience through working with a team of consultants in cytogenetic and molecular science and with professional laboratory technicians. I have collected basic information to compose a handbook, focusing on the cytogenetic laboratory. I was able to carry out this task by: - My experience as a genetic laboratory technician specialist for 10 years; - Using resources from various genetic based textbooks and articles; -Using information gathered from attending various genetic related conferences. Throughout my employment as a genetics laboratory technician, I was constantly asked by fellow workers, friends, family, and physicians, to explain what my job entails. As a result, the handbook was composed with two categories of readers in mind: the chief audience being the cytogenetics laboratory workers, who in addition to possessing the technical skills for chromosomal analysis, should understand the theoretical basis of clinical cytogenetics and be aware of the practical implications of their work; the second group targeting people with limited background in genetics. With genetics being such a power topic, my goal is to make this handbook a valuable resource for all levels of students and professionals interested in genetics. This handbook serves as an excellent reference for genetic academicians and enthusiasts. It is also an easy introductory guide for those with limited knowledge in cytogenetics and chromosomes. It provides ample information on DNA and the human genome, syndromes, gene mutations, chromosome composition and location, the role chromosomes play in sex determination, chromosomal changes throughout evolution, chromosomal movements during mitosis and meiosis, and chromosomal abnormalities. Cytog

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