



American
Clinical Laboratory
Association

Letters to the Editor
The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018

To the editor:

Mapping the human genome was not just about finding cures [“A Decade Later, Genetic Map Yields Few New Cures,” June 12, 2010]. It was also about understanding disease so we could provide better care. That is currently happening in spades throughout health delivery. Genetic tests today identify the exact molecular nature of a patient or disease, thus enabling better prevention and more targeted treatment. In childhood leukemia, today's cure-rate exceeds 80 percent versus only four percent in the 1960's—thanks to genetic tests that allow better timing and dosing of anti-cancer drugs. Genetic tests for variations in a patient's ability to metabolize blood-thinning drugs allows more precise dosing—potentially cutting hospitalizations by a third. Similar progress in better care is happening in HIV, colon cancer, melanoma, heart disease, and adult leukemia—all thanks to knowledge from mapping the human genome.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alan Mertz'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Alan' being more prominent than the last name 'Mertz'.

Alan Mertz
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