

## DNA Sample Collection from People

**General Shipping Instructions** – Overnight shipping is not required. However, to make sure that your precious sample(s) arrives safely we strongly suggest using a shipping method with tracking or delivery confirmation. U.S. Priority Mail with delivery confirmation is inexpensive and reliable.

**Cheek Swabs** - Cheek swabs are a great way to collect DNA. A soft brush is gently scraped on the inner cheek to remove cells that are constantly being replaced by our bodies. Label the swab packet, open it and remove the swab. Insert the brush into the cheek pouch with the bristles pressed out against the inner cheek (away from the teeth). Gently brush up and down for about 30 seconds. Avoid taking the sample immediately after eating. Rest the swab on top of the packet to let it air-dry for 30 minutes or more, then place back in the packet and into a paper envelope. **DNA is best preserved when kept dry so avoid plastic bags or air-tight containers. Bacteria will grow on the swab in a sealed container. As a substitute for a Perpetua cheekswab, a new, small toothbrush or several cotton-tipped swabs can be used. Air-dry for at least 30 minutes and place in a paper envelope for shipping. Consider this option if you would rather not wait for a DNA collection kit or if the person is very ill.**

**Hair** - Hair contains very small amounts of DNA, whether plucked or taken from a hairbrush. Many clients request that a DNA sample from themselves, collected with a cheekswab, be combined with DNA from the hair of a loved one. If the sample hairs are less than an inch long, send an amount that, when bunched, could fit in a teaspoon. For longer hair, gather about 5-10 strands and tape them at one end before sealing in a Ziploc bag. Label each bag containing a sample by writing your name on a piece of tape adhered to the outside of each bag.

**Cremated ashes** - During the cremation process the DNA is completely mineralized. The fine ash can be mixed with DNA from another sample (such as a cheek swab or hair) if desired. Many clients request that a DNA sample from themselves, collected with a cheekswab, be combined with the ashes from a loved one. The ashes will be visible as a fine texture on the surface of the DNA. Please note that cremated ashes vary in color and the DNA tint may be modified with the addition of ashes. Enclose a few teaspoons of ashes in a small Ziploc bag and enclose in the same envelope with the other sample. Please label the bag by writing the name on a piece of tape (Scotch brand or masking tape) and adhere it to the bag. **Unless instructed otherwise, Perpetua will respectfully scatter unused ashes in the redwood forest near our facility.**

**\*Please note that cheekswab and hair samples do not have sufficient DNA to complete the Life Jewel helix. Botanical DNA is added and acts as a lattice to support the sample DNA without interfering with its unique qualities.**