Ethical Issues in Genotyping for Pharmacogenetics and Genetic Disorders

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Abstract

New knowledge in human genetics and pharmacogenetics allows for new medical and ethical options, but also requires a review of traditional models of treatment and consulting. Pharmacogenetics will allow for individualised drug development and prescription; drug research and drug safety oversight has not yet responded to these new options. Genetic testing for disorders has an impact not just on carriers, but on their families as well; this requires the development of new models of family ethics and family responsibilities and solidarity, also of new models of communication-in-trust and cooperation-in-trust between the carrier and the consultant. Time has come to replace the soft-paternalistic model of informed consent by a true partnership model of informed contract between patient and physician and between geneticists and carriers.

Keyword : Family ethics; Genotyping; Informed contract; Pharmacogenetics