

GINGER HAIR

BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester on air question.: Can you predict who is likely to have ginger hair?

Genetic inheritance is fixed at gestation. The genes are inherited from both your parents but also from your ancestors on both sides, over a number of generations. It is therefore difficult to accurately pinpoint where, how and who will have ginger hair and fair freckled skin.

Looking at the recessive gene that produces ginger hair, it requires copies of the same variant in each parent's genetic history. However, this gene may lie dormant and not manifest itself for an indeterminate number of generations. This means that the parents themselves (or their parents) may not be ginger haired, and that, if they have one ginger-haired child, there is no strong likelihood that any sibling will also have ginger hair, unless they are identical twins.

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