**Kari Stefansson**
deCODE genetics, Iceland

# The genetics of common diseases

## Biography

Kári Stefánsson, M.D., Dr. Med. is founder and CEO of Reykjavik-based deCODE genetics. In Iceland he has pioneered the use of population-scale genetics to understand variation in the sequence of the human genome. His work, published in more than 600 scientific papers, has focused on how genomic diversity is generated and on the discovery of sequence variants impacting susceptibility to common diseases. The population approach he has advanced in Iceland has served as the model for national genome projects around the world and contributed to the realization of several aspects of precision medicine, including to the discovery and development of therapeutic targets and compounds for Amgen. Prior to founding deCODE in 1996 he was professor of neurology, neuropathology and neuroscience at Harvard and had previously held faculty positions in neurology, neuropathology and neurosciences at the University of Chicago, from 1983-1993.

Dr. Stefansson has received some of the highest honors in biomedical research and genetics, including the including the Sackler Lecture at MIT, the European Society of Human Genetics Award, the Anders Jahre Award, the American Alzheimer's Association's Inge Grundke-Iqbal Award, the Federation of European Biomedical Societies' Sir Hans Krebs Medal, and the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) William Allan Award. His work has been recognized by major international publications and bodies including Time, Newsweek, Forbes, BusinessWeek and the World Economic Forum. He holds Iceland's highest honor, the Order of the Falcon, and in 2019 was elected the first president of the Nordic Society of Human Genetics and Precision Medicine.

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