

R-M269 versus R1b1a1a2

Haplogroup R is one of the major Y-Chromosome Haplogroups with its attending subgroups called haplotypes. The current reporting format was designed in 2002 by the Y Chromosome Consortium (YCC) in 2002. While the YCC is no longer active, their Haplogroup formatting system lives on. See:

https://isogg.org/wiki/Y_Chromosome_Consortium

Haplogroup R1b1a1a2 was once referred to as the Western Atlantic Modal Haplogroup (WAMH) but is more commonly known as the Atlantic Modal Haplogroup (AMH) and is one of the most common Haplogroups in Western Europe. See more at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_modal_haplotype

Because the Haplogroup R1b1a1a2 density often exceeds 60% and even up to 90% in some Western European countries Those with this Haplogroup should consider the minimal Y-DNA test or starter test be 37 markers and more markers are often better.

Haplogroup R1b1a1a2 is defined or qualified by a specific SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism) labeled as M269. Please remember it takes a special SNP test to confirm this SNP. I will explain this below in more detail.

The combination of the major Haplogroup R and all its sub-types along with the estimated SNP M269 combines into a short cut code called R-M269.

R-M269 is the shorthand code for the long hand Haplogroup R1b1a1a2 with the estimated SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism) of M269 or SNP M(marker)269. SNPs discovered by other companies use another code (other than M) before the estimated SNP marker value. See: http://isogg.org/tree/ISOGG_HapgrpR.html

Both R-M269, which is becoming more commonly used, and R1b1a1a2, which is more formal, essentially mean the same Haplogroup. But, confusion often arises whether or not the SNP M269 is real (derived or positive) or estimated (guessed or calculated).

SNPs are either estimated or derived (aka confirmed) via testing for the specific SNP. Basic SNPs can be estimated fairly accurately based on the first 10-12 DYS markers used in a Y-DNA test. There are calculators for this online. FTDNA uses one to estimate the short hand code. Please remember that estimated does not mean confirmed.

Some companies, like FTDNA, use colors like red for estimated and green for confirmed. In SNP testing usually you will see a positive sign (+) for derived or meaning the SNP is present. If the SNP is not present, or not confirmed, then a negative sign (-) is used.

Far too many people assume that the estimated SNP is factual and it can cause problems and confusion. And even derived (+ or positively tested) SNPs is dependent on when that test was done and by which DNA testing company. At FTDNA for example, one often sees multiple green confirmed SNPs of older, not so old and newer confirmed SNPs.

Without a road map of SNPs, such as with the ISOGG Haplogroup Y-Tree, people get easily confused.

And by now, dear reader, you are one of the more educated genetic genealogy users that have a more basic understanding of how SNPs are determined and used with their major Haplogroup codes. Especially for Haplogroup R1b1a1a2 (aka R-M269).

For more on SNPs, see:

http://isogg.org/wiki/Single-nucleotide_polymorphism

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single-nucleotide_polymorphism

See more at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_R1b

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_R-M269

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-14630012>

https://gap.familytreedna.com/media/docs/2013/Hammer_M269_Diversity_in_Europe.pdf