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### Self-powered DNA Computers Earn World Record

**Betterhumans Staff**

[Tuesday, February 25, 2003] To your naked eye, it looks like a spoonful of water. But inside, trillions of tiny computers work away, performing 330 trillion operations per second with 99.9% accuracy, and doing so with a million times more energy efficiency than your computer.

Welcome to the rapidly advancing world of **DNA computing**, and to a computer recognized last week by **Guinness World Records** as the smallest biological computing device ever built. It is more than 100,000 times the speed of the fastest PC.

The device is an improved version of one built last year by researchers from the **Weizmann Institute of Science** in Rehovot, Israel.

The first version used enzymes and **DNA** molecules to compute instead of silicon microchips.

The new version does the same, but also breaks two bonds in the DNA input molecule to release energy, allowing the computer to be self-powered. It therefore needs very little energy, and releases less than 25 millionths of a watt as heat.

Several research groups have designs for DNA computers, but they rely on the energy molecule **ATP** for power.

A **summary** of the Weizmann research is published in today's online edition of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

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