



St. Vincent
Cancer Care

You may already know that you have a family history of cancer. But did you know that a gene mutation has been identified in your family that is increasing the risk for cancer? It is very important that you discuss this information with your doctor, and here is why:

- It is possible that you have inherited the same mutation as your family member. If so, you too are at increased risk for developing certain types of cancer.
- If you are at a higher risk to develop cancer, there are surveillance and medical management recommendations that may help prevent cancer or detect it as early as possible.
- Knowing you carry a gene mutation does not determine if or when you will develop cancer; it only informs you that your risk is increased compared to that of the general population.
- In addition to revealing who in the family is at increased risk for developing cancer, genetic testing can reveal who in the family did not inherit the gene mutation and is not considered to be at increased risk and therefore does not require any additional surveillance.
- If you do not carry the known familial mutation, your child(ren) cannot be a carrier.
- The federal Genetic Information and Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) protects you from health insurance and employment discrimination. Life insurance and long-term disability insurance are not included in this protection, so you should seek these before you undergo genetic testing.
- Genetic testing is usually covered by insurance, and there are financial assistance programs to those who are uninsured or under-insured. Also, the cost of testing for a known familial mutation is much less than sequencing all the way through gene(s).
- Genetic counselors can be helpful in navigating the genetic testing process. They will make sure the correct test is ordered, and assist with insurance coverage.

Please do not ignore this information. Whether or not you have inherited the known familial gene mutation was determined prior to your birth. Knowing this information empowers you to make positive changes that may reduce your risk for cancer and ultimately save your life.

For more information or to find a genetic counselor near you, visit www.nsgc.org