



UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

**CANCER RESEARCH
&
TREATMENT CENTER**

**HEREDITARY CANCER
ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**



***Hereditary Cancer:
Are You At Risk?***



DOES CANCER RUN IN YOUR FAMILY?

People often say, “Cancer runs in my family.” This is no surprise, since one in every three people will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime. About 10-15% of people with cancer have other affected relatives. A family history of cancer does not always mean that there is an inherited form of cancer in the family, but when several members of the same family have the same or related cancers, or when cancer has occurred earlier than usual, there is a greater likelihood that the risk of cancer is hereditary.

WHAT IS HEREDITARY CANCER?

Hereditary cancer results from changes in genetic information that is passed from parents to their children. Individuals with changes in their genetic information have an increased risk of developing cancer. They may also pass the genetic change on to their children. Approximately 1 in every 10 individuals with cancer has an inherited (genetic) form of cancer.

THE FOLLOWING MAY INDICATE HEREDITARY CANCER

- ❖ **Cancer that is diagnosed before age 45**
- ❖ **Two or more family members with the same type of cancer**
- ❖ **More than one primary (new) cancer in the same person**
- ❖ **The same kind of cancer in similar organs (example: both breasts, or breast and ovary)**





ARE YOU AT RISK?

The answers to the following questions can help identify someone who is at risk for having an inherited cancer.

In your mother's or father's family ((including yourself) are there two or more family members who have the same kind of cancer?

Including yourself, is there any member of your family who has cancer in similar or paired organs (example: both breasts or breast and ovary?)

Including yourself, has any member of your family had cancer before age 45?

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM FOUND TO BE AT RISK FOR HEREDITARY CANCER?

The goal of identifying individuals who are at risk for hereditary cancer is prevention and early detection of cancer. At the UNM Cancer Research & Treatment Center, an individual plan can be made to address your needs and health risks.

SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE AT INCREASED RISK OF CANCER INCLUDE:

- ❖ A detailed review of your family history with a genetic counselor
- ❖ A detailed **discussion** of your specific risks for cancer and ways to test for or prevent it
- ❖ Information about what cancer screening examinations you need
- ❖ Genetic testing to look for changes in the genes that may increase your risk for hereditary cancer.

WILL MY INSURANCE PAY FOR A GENETIC EVALUATION?

Many insurance plans cover the cost of genetic counseling. We can help you get prior authorization from your insurance company. Coverage for genetic testing is on a case-by-case basis, and coverage depends on your individual medical carrier.



**For more information, contact the Hereditary Cancer Assessment Program at the University of New Mexico Cancer Research & Treatment Center
Call 272-6545**



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THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

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