

What Is Cancer Genetic Counseling?

What is Cancer Genetic Counseling?

If you or a close relative has had cancer, you may be concerned about your risk for a future cancer and what you can do to reduce that risk. A close relative is a parent, brother, sister, child, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or grandparent.

You may wonder if your children or other relatives are at risk. You may also wonder if genetic testing is right for you.

Genetic counseling can help answer your questions.

A genetic counselor is a nationally certified health care provider. He or she can:

- interpret complex family histories
- educate about cancers that run in families (known as inherited or genetic cancer)
- talk about risks and prevention
- help patients and families make informed decisions about genetic testing and help interpret test results.

Genetic counselors can help you make an informed decision about a genetic test.

Is Cancer Genetic Counseling Right for You?

Genetic counseling may be right for you if you or a close relative had any of these:

- breast cancer at age 45 to 50 or younger
- breast cancer at any age with Jewish ancestry
- ovarian cancer at any age
- colorectal cancer at age 50 or younger
- any rare type of cancer
- similar types of cancer in many relatives (in either your mother's family or father's family)
- more than 10 colon polyps during your lifetime
- more than one type of cancer.

If you or any of your family have or had any of the above, or if you are concerned about your cancer risk, talk with your health care provider about genetic counseling.

What is Genetic Testing?

Not everyone with a personal or family history of cancer will benefit from a genetic test. Meeting with a genetic counselor does not mean that you will have a genetic test. You may learn more about the testing options and if they are right for you.

Not all genes linked to cancer risk have been identified. Before you have a genetic test, you want to know:

- that the correct test is being done
- how valid the test results are
- what your next steps are when you receive the results.

A genetic counselor will help answer these questions and help you make decisions that are right for you.

How Do You Take a Genetic Test?

Genetic testing is usually done with a saliva (spit) or a blood test. It examines one or more genes that are known to be linked to increased cancer risk. Not all genes linked to cancer risk have been identified.

Genetic testing may be covered by insurance. Your genetic counselor can help in the testing process. He or she can help you get approval from your insurance company before having a test, if needed.

How Does the Clinic Visit End?

The genetic counselor will sum up the visit, give you recommendations for your next steps, and answer your questions.

He or she will send a summary of the visit to the health care provider who referred you. You will receive a copy.

How is This Service Billed?

There is no fee from the genetic counselor.

A fee from Rice Memorial Hospital will be billed to your insurance provider for your genetic counseling visit. Check with your insurance provider to see if your insurance will cover this service.

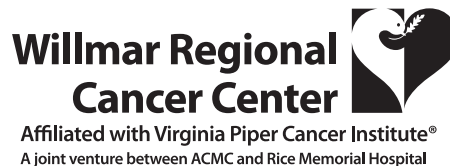
Who To Call for More Information

For more information, talk with your health care provider or call a genetic counselor at:

Willmar Regional Cancer Center

Phone: (320) 231-4570

Toll-free: (800) 247-1478



ACMC form #341 (07/08/13)