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When to See a Genetic Counselor

You may be worried about your family health history. Most people do not have a high risk for a health problem based on their family health history. But some families may need to talk with a genetic counselor or other trained specialist about their family health history. Genetic tests may also be an option. You should always talk to your doctor before getting any tests.

WHO SHOULD TALK TO A GENETIC COUNSELOR?

You may need to talk to your doctor or a genetic counselor if your family has:

- Health problems that occur at an earlier age than expected (10 to 20 years before most people get the disease)
- The same health problem in more than one close family member
- A health problem that does not usually affect a certain gender (for example, breast cancer in a male family member)
- Certain combinations of health problems within a family (for example, breast and ovarian cancer or heart disease and diabetes)
- Birth defects, growth or development problems, pregnancy concerns, and other known genetic conditions in the family

WHAT WILL I LEARN FROM A GENETIC COUNSELOR?

A genetic counselor will help you:

- Assess your risk for a health problem that runs in your family
- Diagnose a health problem and causes of it
- Decide if genetic testing is an option
- Tell you about treatment or management of the problem
- Refer you to support groups and resources

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Huntsman Cancer Institute, www.huntsmancancer.org

- To schedule an appointment with a genetic counselor, call 801-587-9555
- For other questions, call 801-585-0100 or toll-free 866-275-0243

Intermountain Health Care, Clinical Genetics Institute

- To talk with a genetic specialist, call 801-408-5014

University of Utah Hospital

- To schedule an appointment with a genetic counselor, call 801-581-7825

March of Dimes, www.marchofdimes.com



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