

Cancer Risk Assessment Screening & Prevention Program

At Maryland Oncology Hematology, we provide comprehensive medical care and support services for people diagnosed with cancer or those at a higher risk of developing cancer. If you are considering genetic testing, it is important to talk with a healthcare team that has received special training for common hereditary cancers and who can help you understand your options.

Through hereditary risk assessment, we can help you learn about your inherited risk of developing cancer, such as breast, gastrointestinal, uterine/ovarian and others, and help you and your family understand the results if you decide to undergo genetic testing. Furthermore, we will provide you the information you need to make decisions about prevention or treatment options.

As part of our integrated team, our Oncologists, Advanced Practice Providers and Genetic Counselors will provide information and support for you and your family by:

- Educating you about how genetics plays a part in cancer risk; Assessing your risk of a genetic disorder by researching your family's cancer history.
- Discussing the medical, social and ethical impact of genetic testing on you and your family; Interpreting genetic testing results and medical data; and Explaining possible treatments and/or preventive measures.



**Aimee
Macagney, MS, CGC**
Genetic Counselor

Aimee Macagney attended James Madison University where she received her Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences and a minor in Biology. She then pursued and completed a Master's of Science in Genetic Counseling at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine at the MCV Campus. Her training included providing genetic counseling in various settings including prenatal, pediatric, adult, metabolic, cancer and cardiology. Her passion lies in hereditary cancer predispositions. After graduation, she moved to Maryland where she is board certified in genetic counseling. She started with Maryland Oncology Hematology in July 2022 where she continues to provide genetic counseling and testing to patients all across MOH.

To schedule an appointment call:
240.853.3318

Annapolis - 810 Bestgate Road, Suite 400
Rockville - 9905 Medical Center Drive, Suite 200
Silver Spring - 11886 Healing Way, Suite 701
Columbia - 10710 Charter Drive, Suite G020

Virtual Consultations Available

Your Rights

Some patients worry that results of genetic testing could lead to discrimination on the part of employers or insurance companies. The 2008 federal law called the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, or GINA, prohibits insurers from denying coverage or charging higher premiums based on genetic test results. GINA also bars employers with more than 15 employees from using genetic information to discriminate against employees or job applicants.



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301.424.6231
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Cancer Genetics

What is Cancer Risk Assessment or Evaluation and How Does it Work?

Hereditary Cancer Risk Assessment is the process of learning how genetics play a role in cancer risk and how likely your family is to have inherited predispositions to certain cancers. Prior to a risk assessment or evaluation appointment, you will receive paperwork to complete regarding your health and family history. It is important to provide any medical records including pathology or copies of genetic test results for you and/or other family members.

At the appointment, you will learn about the role of genetics in cancer risk as well as what type of testing (if any) is recommended for you. You will also learn the risks, benefits and limitations of this testing. We will discuss the medical, social, emotional and ethical impact of genetic testing on you and your family. Once testing is complete, we review results with you in person and can personalize your screening/treatment plan. We also discuss the impact on family members and identify appropriate resources.

What is Genetic Testing?

Genetic testing is the process of using medical tests to look for specific changes (mutations) in a person's genes when they have features of a hereditary condition. This is usually done by a blood or saliva sample. Most genetic testing is ordered through special health care providers and sent to specific genetic labs.

Why are Hereditary Risk Assessment and Genetic Testing Important?

By determining whether an individual is at an elevated risk for cancer based on a gene mutation or strong family history, we can offer special options for medical management, lifestyle choices, and family planning. This includes:

- Screening for cancers (at a younger age, more frequent intervals and/or using different technology)
- Prevention or risk reduction of cancers (through surgery or medications)
- Potential specialized cancer treatment
- Potential modification of cancer risk through diet and exercise
- Information regarding risks to children and other family members

Who Should Participate in Hereditary Risk Assessment or Genetic Testing?

Approximately 5-10% of cancers are inherited. Changes in a particular gene can be passed down from a parent and are associated with a higher lifetime risk of cancer. Features suggestive of hereditary cancer include:

- Any individual diagnosed with cancer prior to age 50
- Any individual who has developed more than one cancer
- Any individual with a rare type of cancer (ovarian, male breast cancer, pancreatic)
- An individual with two or more family members diagnosed with the same cancer
- A family member with an identifiable gene mutation known to increase the risk of cancer
- Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry with a personal or family history of cancer
- Families with constellation of breast, ovarian, colon and uterine cancers



If you or your family has these features, it is important to review this information with your doctor and to schedule an appointment with our team for a more in depth discussion.

Does Insurance Cover the Appointment and Testing?

HIPAA protects patient privacy and prohibits health insurance providers from discrimination based on genetic information. An appointment for Cancer Risk Evaluation is billed to insurance the same as any appointment to a specialist.

Coverage for any additional tests varies by insurance company. While there are general guidelines for coverage, several insurance companies do require pre- and post test consultation by a trained genetics professional to ensure that the appropriate test is ordered. Nearly all genetic tests are pre-authorized by the specific laboratory that we send testing to.

Our benefit specialists can help with this process and answer any questions you might have regarding coverage.