



TALKING WITH YOUR LOVED ONES ABOUT YOUR GENETIC TEST

If you have a *BRCA* mutation, you have a 50% chance of passing it on to your children and there is a 50% chance your siblings have the mutation. Therefore, the results of your genetic test can impact medical decisions and options for you and your family, so it's important to share your results with loved ones.

TELLING YOUR LOVED ONES

- Sharing genetic test results with your family isn't easy. Your test results may raise concerns among family members about their own cancer risk and medical decisions
- Hereditary cancer risk can affect individuals in different ways and your relatives may react differently than you did to genetic testing. They may need additional information and emotional support
- Genetic counseling and testing could help your relatives gain a better understanding of their cancer risk. If they test positive, options for detecting and treating cancer are available that may improve their health outcomes. If they test negative, they will know they're not at increased risk for developing a hereditary cancer
- A genetic counselor can advise you and your family on whether you should consider taking the test or how to deal with the results

Counseling may include:

- Assessing risk
- Interpreting test results, which can provide either a positive, negative or an ambiguous result

- Identifying family members who may be candidates for testing
- Explaining medical options for cancer treatment and prevention based on your test

DEALING WITH EMOTIONS

- It's not unusual to feel overwhelmed, anxious or fearful when telling your family about your *BRCA* mutation status. These are normal emotions, so don't be hard on yourself. Accept that you cannot control your family's reaction or their emotions – but remember how you felt when you first received your test results
- Consider sharing what you're going through with close friends or connect with others also affected by hereditary cancer through national advocacy and local support groups
- Remember to make time for yourself, limit alcohol, eat well-balanced meals and try to get enough sleep

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How will I react to my test results and what will I do if they are positive?
- Am I prepared to cope with the results?
- How will my result affect my family?
- Should my family know the results of the test?
- How will I talk to my children about my result?



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AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Some family members may not want to learn more about hereditary cancer syndrome or get tested. But for those who do, a genetic counselor may be able to help you compile information to share with relatives, including helping them find a genetics expert in their area. Some advocacy groups also provide guides that can help you share test results with relatives.

FORCE

A national nonprofit organization devoted to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by hereditary breast and ovarian cancers:

www.facingourrisk.org/

Sharsheret

A national not-for-profit organization supporting young Jewish women and their families facing breast cancer:

www.sharsheret.org

National Society of Genetic Counselors

A professional organization that aims to advance the roles of genetic counselors in health care and ensure the availability of quality genetic services:

www.nsgc.org

Know:BRCA

The Know:BRCA online tool, which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Bring Your Brave program, is a resource developed to help women understand their risks for having a *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* gene mutation:

www.knowbrca.org

These organizations are independent organizations and are not affiliated with AstraZeneca.

