

Department of Medical Genetics

Family Cancer Clinic

Introduction

Very occasionally, people inherit a tendency to develop certain forms of cancer. However, cancer is fairly common and inherited mutations cause only a very small percentage of all cancers. This means that many families where one or more individuals have been affected by cancer do **not** carry an inherited mutation and the cancers in these families have arisen simply by chance.

At the Family Cancer Clinic we aim to pick out the small number of families where some members are at increased risk of developing cancer in order to offer them choices that enable them to minimise their risk. We are often able to reassure others that their risk is no different from, or not much different from, the risk of other families in the general population.

This leaflet aims to:

- explain the role of the Family Cancer Clinic
- give you an idea of what to expect at your appointment
- let you know what information you can provide to enable you to get the most out of your appointment

What is the Family Cancer Clinic?

The Family Cancer Clinic aims to:

- allow you to talk about what your family history of cancer means to you and your family
- provide information about your individual risk of developing cancer based on your family history
- answer your questions about inherited cancer and genetic testing
- explain what can be done to reduce any risk of cancer or to detect cancer early when it is more easily treated

What happens during an appointment at the Family Cancer Clinic?

Your appointment will last for about an hour and you will see a genetic counsellor or a doctor who specialises in genetics.

To help us to advise you, we would be grateful for certain information such as the names and ages of the members of your family and some specific information about members of your family who have had cancer, such as the name of the hospital where their cancer was treated and the name of the doctor who cared for them.

So it would be extremely helpful if you could put all the information you can on the enclosed family history form and then send it back to us before your appointment.

You may wish to ask other members of your family for some of this information. If you discover any extra information after returning your family history form, please bring it with you when you come to the clinic. You may also like to write down any questions that you would like us to answer.

The information that you provide will help us to confirm your relatives' diagnoses in order to make sure that our advice to you is accurate. (We will, of course, not do this without asking for consent from your living relatives). We will then assess the chance that there is an inherited predisposition to cancer in your family and explain what this means for you and other members of your family.

If you are found to be at increased risk of cancer, we will discuss with you what you can do in order to reduce this risk and/or to detect cancer early. This might include issues such as:

- genetic testing
- options to prevent cancer
- screening to find either early cancer or changes that precede cancer

Genetic Testing

For a small number of people, we may be able to offer a blood test to see whether they have inherited a predisposition to cancer. Such tests are not always possible and, as they involve complicated and time consuming work, it may be many months before their results become available.

We do not generally take blood for genetic testing during your first visit to the Family Cancer Clinic. These tests have important implications for you and your family so we usually offer you additional counselling sessions to give you time to consider these issues and to discuss them in greater detail.

Preventative Options

Sometimes there are measures you can take to prevent cancer such as certain types of surgery. These may be discussed with you at your appointment.

Screening Programmes

Your family history may mean that you are eligible for extra screening. If so, we will discuss the benefits and disadvantages of this screening with you and, if you wish to have screening, we will help to arrange this for you.

Anything else you wish to discuss?

There may be other areas you wish to discuss. We will do our best to give you the most accurate information in order to help you to make your own decisions. We will also discuss all choices available to you but we will not tell you what we think you should do or should not do.

Research Interests

This department is involved in several research projects studying inherited aspects of cancer. You may be asked to fill in a questionnaire or to be interviewed about your views of the clinic or your attitudes towards genetic testing. This is entirely optional. If you are willing to take part, it would be a great help to us but we fully understand if you do not wish to do so.

We look forward to meeting you.

If you need more advice about any aspect of inherited cancer, you are welcome to contact: The Genetic Counsellors, Medical Genetics Department, Box 134, Addenbrooke's NHS Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2QQ

Tel: 01223 216446

Fax 01223 217054

This leaflet is based on an original leaflet written by the Clinical Genetics Department, Guy's Hospital, London

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

Cantonese

તમને આ માહિતી બીજી ભાષાઓમાં, મોટા અક્ષરોમાં અથવા સાંભળી શકાય એવા માધ્યમ (ઓડીઓ ફોર્મેટ)માં જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો.

Gujarati

تکایہ پرسیار بکہ نہ گہر نہ وزانیاریہت دہوی بہ زمانیکی تر ، بہ پیتی گہورہ یانیش بہ شیوہی دہنگ

Kurdish

آگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

Urdu



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site.
For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Document history

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