



PINK HOPE

KNOW YOUR RISK, CHANGE YOUR FUTURE.

Pink Hope empowers women and their families to take control of their hereditary breast and ovarian health through education, prevention and support.

TALK TO YOUR FAMILY

To help you determine your family history of breast and ovarian cancer due to an inherited faulty gene, look on both your father's and mother's side of the family for:

- The number of blood relatives who developed cancer. The more blood relatives who have developed cancer, the more likely the cancer is due to an inherited faulty gene.
- The types of cancer (in particular breast, ovarian and bowel cancer).
- The age at which cancers in the family developed. The younger people were when they developed cancer (compared to what is expected in the general community), the more likely it is to be due to hereditary factors. Before 50 is considered 'early' for the development of breast and ovarian cancers.

The more cancer patterns that are present, the more likely it is that there is an inherited faulty gene in the family, causing a higher than usual chance of cancer. However, it is not definite. It is important to know that some people who inherit a faulty gene that causes an increased chance of cancer, never go on to develop cancer

Understanding your risk of hereditary cancer can empower you to take action and share important health information with your loved ones.

TIPS TO START THE CONVERSATION

Here are some tips for talking to your family when you are documenting your family health history:

- Talk to a relative/s you feel comfortable with. Remember some may not wish to discuss health matters. However, you may still be able to gather information or partial information about them from other members of your family.
- Choose an appropriate time and situation to ask for the information. Be sensitive with your questions and respect your relative's decision if they do not want to talk about it, or find it uncomfortable to discuss health matters.
- Explain how this information is for the benefit of your health and for future generations.
- Write the information down and add to your list as new information is found.
- Don't worry if your list is incomplete. You may have lost contact with some relatives, or older generations may have passed, making it impossible to find out information about their health history. In this case it is still worth recording everything you can, as your health family history document will be of benefit to future generations in your family.



So start a conversation with your parents and relatives.

Remember to include the men in your family as they can be carriers of gene mutations as well. Record all important information, and keep it safe and add to it as you learn more.

Use the "Family Health Tree" and "What Family Health Information to Collect" documents on pinkhope.org.au to record your family health history.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE

If your family history looks significant, take your Family Health Treet to your GP and discuss your risk. Ask for a referral to a Family Cancer Clinic if you believe you are at high-risk and want further assessment and advice.

At a Family Cancer Clinic, you can see a Genetic Counsellor who is trained in providing counselling and information to families with a history of cancer.

TAKE ACTION TODAY

Make a decision and commitment to yourself about how you are going to manage your risk. The plan you come up with is your plan for you. Women have different plans and there is no wrong or right plan only the right plan and decision for you. Some women commit to screening while others will go straight for surgery.

Below is Sammy's story, one of our Pink Hope ambassadors. Read about how she researched her family health history, found herself to be BRCA1, and the plans she has made.

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When I was 18, my Nana passed away from breast cancer. After attending her funeral, my Mum and I made a family tree of all the women in the family, and discovered there were a staggering 13 women who have had breast cancer just on my mums side!

Mum and I had previously discussed this, but we didn't realise how many women there were. My Mum had a double mastectomy at the age of 30 after been diagnosed with breast cancer. I then got in contact with a cousin and after 2 years of tests and agonising waits we found the breast cancer gene. I then had several chats with my partner, my mum, dad and genetics counsellor to make the decision to have the gene test myself. It came back positive. I have the BRCA1 gene fault.

I had mentally prepared myself for this result and in a way I find myself lucky that I know my condition, so I can make the best decision for my health. I constantly think about this and have weighed all my options. So after many thoughts and consultations with specialists I have decided that I'm going to have a preventative mastectomy.

I have just celebrated my 21st birthday and I feel really passionate about my decision. I hope that one day I can inspire other young women, who may be feeling scared and anxious, to make a decision that is the best one for them.

Sammy

LEARN ABOUT YOUR HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

If you determine that you are high-risk, you now need to research your options.

The Genetic Counsellor at the Family Cancer Clinic can help you by explaining genetics and inherited cancer, individual risk, screening, and cancer risk reduction strategies.

The Pink Hope website has detailed information on screening, risk reducing medication and surgical options. Start here to learn more about your health care choices.

FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION - WHAT TO COLLECT

Use the Family Health Tree to record your family health history of breast, ovarian and prostate cancer. Record both your father's and mother's side of the family, noting:

01 HAVE ANY OF YOUR BLOOD RELATIVES HAD CANCER?

The number of blood relatives (people biologically related to you) who developed cancer. The more blood relatives who have developed cancer, the more likely the cancer is due to an inherited faulty gene.

02 WHAT TYPES OF CANCER WERE THEY?

The types of cancer (in particular breast, ovarian and/or prostate cancer).

03 HOW OLD WERE THEY WHEN THEY DEVELOPED CANCER?

The age at which cancers in the family developed. The younger people were when they developed cancer (compared to what is expected in the general community), the more likely it is to be due to hereditary factors. Before 50 is considered 'early' for the development of breast and ovarian cancers.

The age at which a relative died and the cause of death (in particular if it is breast, ovarian and/or prostate cancer).

When documenting your Family Health History you should think about the health of family members that are related to you by blood only. This includes your:

FATHER - MOTHER - SISTER/S - BROTHER/S - CHILDREN - GRANDPARENTS - AUNTS - UNCLAS - COUSINS

It is of greatest importance to know the health of your first degree (immediate) relatives. First degree relatives are your father, mother, siblings and children. Your grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins are known as your second degree relatives.