St. Joseph Medical Center
The Cancer Institute
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Referring Guidelines for Hereditary Cancer Risk Assessments

The Cancer Institute at St. Joseph Medical Center includes genetic counseling as part of its comprehensive list of services. A genetic counselor educates families or individuals about their risk of passing on or inheriting a genetic predisposition for certain disorders. The goal of genetic counseling is to aid the individual's understanding of the disorder, the risks of recurrence and the options for testing, treatment, or management of the disorder. In most cases, cancer is not related to strong inherited factors. However, a number of cancers are associated with familial syndromes that can increase an individual's predisposition to develop cancer. During the cancer risk assessment individuals will learn more about their cancer risks, potential risks to family members, genetic testing options for hereditary cancers, and appropriate screening, management, and treatment recommendations. Genetic counseling services include the eliciting of a comprehensive family history, a review of the medical history, a review of inheritance patterns and a discussion of the benefits, risks, and limitations of gene testing.

The criteria to consider a referral for a hereditary cancer risk assessment include:

- Individuals with breast cancer before the age of 45 years
- Individuals with ovarian cancer at any age
- Individuals with both breast and ovarian cancer
- Males diagnosed with breast cancer
- Individuals with bilateral breast cancer
- Individuals with more than one primary breast cancer
- Individuals with a triple negative breast cancer (ER negative, PR negative and HER2 neu negative) breast cancer diagnosed under the age of 70 years
- Males with breast cancer
- Individuals with a personal or family history of breast cancer who have Ashkenazi Jewish heritage
- Individuals with a personal or family history of breast cancer who have Icelandic, Swedish or Hungarian descent
- Individuals with a known genetic mutation (e.g. BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation) in their family
- Individuals with breast and/or ovarian cancer in at least 2 generations on the same side of the family
- Individuals with personal and family history suggestive of a hereditary cancer syndrome
    - e.g. Male breast cancer, ovarian/breast cancer
    - e.g. Breast cancer, ovarian cancer and pancreatic cancer
    - e.g. Sarcoma, breast cancer, brain tumor
    - e.g. Breast cancer, thyroid cancer, uterine cancer