

For more information:

If you need more advice about any aspect of inherited cancer, you are welcome to contact:

**Clinical Genetics Departments**

Northern Scotland (main base Aberdeen)

Tel: 01224 552120 Fax: 01224 559390

(Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Western & Northern Isles)

Tayside (main base Dundee)

Tel: 01382 632035 Fax: 01382 645731

(Perth & Kinross, Angus, North East Fife)

South East Scotland (main base Edinburgh)

Tel: 0131 651 1012 Fax: 0131 651 1013

(Borders, Lothian, South West Fife)

West of Scotland (main base Glasgow)

Tel: 0141 201 0808 Fax: 0141 201 0361

(Glasgow, Argyll & Bute, Ayrshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Stirling, Lanarkshire, Falkirk)

If you need more advice about cancer and support groups, please contact:

**Maggies Centres**

[www.maggiescentres.org](http://www.maggiescentres.org)

Maggies Highlands Tel: 01463 706302

Maggies Dundee Tel: 01382 496384

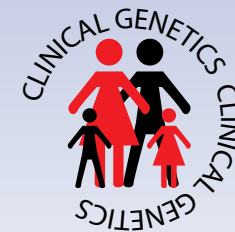
Maggies Edinburgh Tel: 0131 5373131

Maggies Glasgow Tel: 0141 330 3311

Seen in clinic by.....

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# Genetic Testing



Information for women  
who have had breast  
or ovarian cancer

## What is a genetic test?

If there is a chance that you have had an "inherited" type of breast or ovarian cancer, we will have talked to you about the possibility of having a **genetic test**.

Having a genetic test involves taking a blood sample. We would look at your sample to see if you have an altered BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene (please see leaflet about inherited breast and ovarian cancer).

If there is only a small chance that you have an altered gene, we may not test your sample now but suggest that we can store a sample of your blood to test in the future.

If we find that you have an altered gene, other members of your family can be tested to see if they have inherited the same altered gene as you.

## What is involved in genetic testing?

After you have discussed what genetic testing could mean for you, you may decide to give a blood sample. We will ask you to sign a consent form and we will take a blood sample from you.

The laboratory team will then search through the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes in your blood sample to see if the code in either of these genes differs from that of a normal gene.

## When will you hear from us?

If you would like to know the result, we will contact you when we have looked at the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes in your blood sample. This can take a long time, as the genes are large and genetic alterations may be hard to find.

The result is confidential to you and it is up to you whether or not you tell other members of your family or your doctors.

## What do the results mean if an altered gene is found in your sample?

### For you

It would confirm that your cancer was probably due to an altered gene that has been passed down to you from one of your parents.

If you have already had breast cancer you may be at increased risk of getting breast cancer again or of getting ovarian cancer. Or, if you have already had ovarian cancer, you may be at increased risk of getting breast cancer.

### For your family

Each of your children (if you have any) would have a 50/50 chance of having inherited that altered gene from you.

Other members of your family could have a genetic test to see whether or not they have inherited the same genetic alteration as you.

## What do the results mean if an altered gene is not found in your sample?

### For you

Unfortunately, if we do not find an altered gene in your blood sample, we cannot give you a definite answer about whether or not your cancer is inherited. Either your breast or ovarian cancer **may not** have been inherited **or** you **may** still have an alteration in another breast/ ovarian cancer gene that has not yet been discovered, or we have been unable to find the alteration in the genes that we tested.

We would store your sample unless you ask us not to. This is because if, in the future, we discover more breast/ovarian cancer genes, we may be able to carry out further tests on your blood sample.

### For your family

If we do not find an altered gene in your sample it means that other members of your family may still be at increased risk of getting breast or ovarian cancer. However we would not be able to offer them genetic testing.

It would be important for them to continue with any screening that has been arranged for them.

## What can be done to detect breast and ovarian cancer early?

### Breast screening

If you have had breast cancer and are still seeing a specialist, he or she will help you to decide how often you should be screened.

If you are no longer seeing a specialist but there is a chance that your cancer could have been inherited, we may be able to help to arrange regular breast screening for you.

### Ovarian screening

If you are at increased risk of ovarian cancer, you may be offered regular ovarian screening. This would involve having a blood test and a vaginal (internal) ultrasound scan of your ovaries.

**If you change your address we would be grateful if you would let us know.**