

Which genes increase the risk of these cancers?

The two genes which we know are important in breast, ovarian and possibly prostate cancer when they are altered in this way are called BRCA1 and BRCA2. There may be other important genes which have not yet been discovered.

What if a man inherits an altered BRCA2 gene?

If a man inherits an altered BRCA2 gene his lifetime risk of developing prostate cancer is increased to 1 chance in 7. He may have a slightly increased chance of developing breast cancer and possibly colorectal cancer. Each of his children will have a 50/50 chance of inheriting the altered gene from him.

How do you know if you have an altered gene?

If someone in your family is known to have an altered BRCA2 gene it means that you can also be tested. We ask you to come to the clinic at least twice before giving a sample to discuss the implications of being tested and how you would feel about the result. We ask you to return to the clinic for the results 4 weeks later. We will offer you follow up appointments after the result.

What screening is available for men who carry the altered gene, or who are at 50/50 risk of having the altered gene?

No screening test for prostate cancer has been shown to detect all cases of cancer and sometimes results of tests can be abnormal, even in men who do not have cancer. This can cause a great deal of anxiety as well as unnecessary investigations. However, if a man is found to be at increased risk of prostate cancer he can discuss screening with his GP who will advise him about what is available locally.

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Prostate screening involves examination of the prostate and a blood test. To examine the prostate, the doctor inserts a finger into the back passage to check that the prostate is not enlarged. The blood test measures the level of a substance called PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) that is raised in prostate cancer.

If you notice any changes in your bowel habits, for example bleeding from your back passage, pain, persistent diarrhoea or constipation, your GP may suggest that you have a bowel examination.

Otherwise bowel screening is not necessary.

If you notice any lumps or bumps in your chest it would be wise to go to your doctor.

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

Telephone: 0131 5373131

www.maggiescentres.org

Seen in clinic by.....

This leaflet was originally designed by Guy's & St. Thomas' Clinical Genetics. Updated by Genetic Interest Group Scotland.

Genetic Testing for men



Information for men
from families with a
known alteration in the
BRCA2 gene