Genetic Testing for Hereditary Cancer

(Frequently Asked Questions)

I am a cancer survivor. Can my cancer be hereditary?

About 5%–10% of all cancers are estimated to be hereditary due to an inherited gene change.

What are genes? How is it related to hereditary cancer?

Genes are pieces of DNA inside each of our cells that instruct them how to function. Genes affect inherited traits passed on from a parent to a child, such as hair and eye color, height etc. They also affect whether a person is likely to develop certain diseases, such as cancer.

Can gene changes be detected?

Yes, genetic testing is a process of using medical tests to look for changes in a person's genes.

How can genetic testing help me or my family?

Genetic tests can help understand if you have a certain gene change known to increase the risk for a certain cancer. Genetic tests can also identify if the same gene change is inherited by your family.

My physician suspects my cancer to be hereditary, and has requested a genetic test? Whom do I talk to?

If your physician suspects your cancer to be hereditary, you will be referred to a genetic counselor.

In what specific situations will my physician refer me to a genetic counselor?

You physician will refer you to a genetic counselor if you have:

- Early onset breast cancer or a triple negative breast cancer (<50 years)
- Male breast cancer at any age
- Early onset cancers
- Medullary thyroid cancer or adrenocortical carcinoma at any age
- Multiple primary cancers in one individual
- Individual with multiple and/or early onset gastrointestinal polyps
- Hereditary cancer syndrome identified
- Hereditary family specific mutation identified
- Family history of any cancers

What exactly happens during genetic testing?

Typically, the process of genetic testing is as follows:

- Risk assessment (to identify the cancer risk, based on your family history)
- Pre–test genetic counseling (pros and cons of the test will be explained to you)
- Informed consent (if you decide to get tested, you will be asked to give an informed consent)
- Sample collection (either your blood or saliva sample will be collected for the test)
- Your sample will be tested in the lab
- Once testing is complete, the lab will report the results to your physician
- Post–test counseling (the results of the report will be explained to you by your physician and the genetic counselor)

Strand Center for Genomics & Personalized Medicine

(A unit of Strand Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd.)

Ground Floor, UAS Alumni Association Building,Veterinary College Campus, Bellary Road, Bangalore – 560 024

For more information or to talk to our genetic counselor call: +91–80–23095252 | Web: www.strandcenters.com