Our Cancer Risk and Prevention Program offers comprehensive cancer genetic counseling and assessment to individuals concerned about their risk of cancer.

Our genetic counselors are licensed professionals with special education and training to help individuals and families understand and manage their cancer risks.

**Personalized Risk Counseling**
Genetic counseling can help you learn about the influence that your personal and family history may have on your chances of developing cancer. Our genetic counselors provide personalized cancer risk assessments, explain genetic testing options, review implications of genetic testing results, discuss recommendations for early detection and prevention of cancer, and provide support resources.

**Your Genes Tell a Story**
Your genetic history reveals a great deal about you and your family, such as your eye color and your ancestry. Your genetic make-up can also provide clues about your health, including your risks for certain types of cancer.

An appointment with a cancer genetic counselor is recommended for individuals who have any personal or family history of:
- Cancer diagnosis at a young age (usually before age 50)
- Multiple primary cancers in the same person
- The same type of cancer in two or more close relatives
- A family pattern of related cancer types
- Certain rare cancers or tumor types
- A known genetic mutation

**Genetic Testing**
Genetic testing is a tool that can be used to further inform your cancer risks. A genetic counselor will review your personal and family medical information to determine the best genetic testing options for you. When genetic testing is recommended, an explanation of the testing options along with the benefits, risks, limitations, costs, and coverage of genetic testing will be provided. In most cases, testing can take place at the time of the initial appointment and involves a blood or saliva sample.

If you have been previously diagnosed with cancer, genetic counseling/testing can help determine if your diagnosis has a hereditary component. This information can lead to specific medical management recommendations and can determine if family members may have similar hereditary risks.

If you have not been diagnosed with cancer, genetic counseling can help to plan the most informative testing strategy for your family.
What to Expect at Your Appointment

Our genetics services within MemorialCare Cancer Institute at Saddleback Memorial are an essential component of our Cancer Risk and Prevention Program. Your first appointment consists of a consultation with a genetic counselor who will:

- Review and assess your cancer risk based on your personal and family history
- Construct a medically focused family tree
- Explain personalized genetic testing recommendations
- Order genetic testing when appropriate
- Develop an individualized cancer screening and prevention program
- Help identify additional family members with increased risks for cancer
- Review your insurance coverage options

It is important to provide copies of previous genetic assessments pursued by you or your relatives.

Follow-up appointments are available as needed.

Insurance Coverage

Understanding Your Insurance Options
Genetic counseling is considered preventative health care and is a covered benefit under most commercial insurance plans. For your convenience, we will verify your plan benefits prior to scheduling your appointment. If you have a HMO plan, we require an authorization from your insurance company. If genetic counseling is not a covered benefit of your insurance plan, a self-pay option is available.

Genetic counselors are experts in understanding insurance coverage for genetic testing. Each insurance company has specific criteria for coverage. Most insurance companies will cover genetic testing when it is medically recommended. Coverage for genetic testing can only be determined after a full evaluation of your medical and family history by a genetic counselor and will be explained to you before you decide whether or not to undergo testing.

Evaluate Your History
Anyone concerned about a personal or family history of cancer may benefit from cancer genetic counseling and risk assessment. Investigating if you are at an increased risk for cancer can be overwhelming. Knowing and understanding your risks can empower you to take steps towards cancer prevention and better manage your care.

Please contact the Cancer Risk and Prevention Program to schedule an appointment with a licensed genetic counselor.

MemorialCare Cancer Institute at Saddleback Memorial Cancer Risk and Prevention Program: Genetic Counseling
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