



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CANCER RISK

Understanding Your Risk of Breast, Ovarian, Colon or Rectal Cancer

Breast cancer, ovarian cancer, colon cancer and rectal cancer are some of the most common cancers in the United States. If you have close family members who have had these cancers or carry certain genes, you may have higher risk of getting cancer yourself. At CHA, we offer genetic testing and counseling to help you figure out if you're at risk. We can also tell you which regular screenings and tests you should have to watch for cancer and detect it early, when it's easiest to treat.

Breast and Ovarian Cancer

About 12% of women will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of their lifetime. The lifetime risk for ovarian cancer is 1.4%. A man's lifetime risk of breast cancer is about 1 in 883.

Some breast and ovarian cancers are caused by genes known as *BRCA1* or *BRCA2*, which can be passed down from generation to generation by either the mother or father. People who have a genetic alteration in one of these genes are at significantly higher risk for breast, ovarian and other cancers. *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* alterations have been found in all ethnic groups but are more common in the Eastern European (Ashkenazi) Jewish population. It is believed that about 2.4% of individuals of Eastern European Jewish descent carry one of the alterations.

Let us help you figure out if you are at increased risk.

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Personal or Family History

“Red Flags” for Increased Breast Cancer Risk

If you, or a member of your family, have had any of the following conditions, you are at higher risk:

- Breast cancer in both breasts (bilateral)
- Breast cancer before age 50
- Ovarian cancer at any age
- Male breast cancer
- Diagnoses of 2 separate cancers in a single individual (ex. breast and ovarian cancer, or 2 separate breast cancer diagnoses)
- BRCA1 or BRCA2 genetic alterations
- Ashkenazi Jewish descent and breast cancer
- More than 2 family members diagnosed with the same type of cancer within the same lineage

Colon Cancer and Rectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States. In the general population, one’s lifetime risk of colon cancer is roughly 1 in 19. A high fat, low fiber diet, or having inflammatory bowel disease may increase the risk of colorectal cancer.

Some colon cancers, especially those diagnosed before age 50, are associated with inherited conditions. For example, Hereditary Non-Polyposis Colon Cancer (HNPCC) and Familial Adenomatous Polyposis (FAP) can increase the chances of getting colon cancer to 60-80%. If you are at increased risk, we will test for the genetic alterations associated with these cancer types.

Let us help you figure out if you are at increased risk.

Personal or Family History

“Red Flags” for Increased Colon Cancer Risk

- Presence of inflammatory bowel disease
- Colon cancer before the age of 50
- Personal history of colon cancer or adenomas (polyps)
- Family member who has tested positive for one of the above genetic alterations

