



Inova Schar Cancer

# Cancer Genetics Program



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The Cancer Genetics Program at Inova Schar Cancer serves those who are concerned about the possibility of inherited cancer based on their personal and/or family history.

Services are provided by board-certified and licensed genetic counselors trained in cancer risk assessment. We see patients and families with many different types of cancers, including breast, ovarian and colon cancer.

Our expertise includes helping patients navigate through complex medical information and the practical and ethical implications of genetic testing.

## What is cancer genetic counseling?

Though the majority of cancers in adults are sporadic and not related to inherited genes or lifestyle, a small percentage of cancer (about 5 to 10 percent) is hereditary.

At Inova Schar Cancer, our genetic counselors are trained in cancer risk assessment, as well as in the special counseling needs of patients who choose to undergo genetic testing. Cancer genetic counseling includes:

- Reviewing medical history, family history (including cancer types and age at diagnosis), other cancer risk factors and prior genetic testing results, if available
- Estimating a person's risk of developing specific cancers
- Assessing the likelihood that the cancer(s) in a family are hereditary
- Discussing the benefits, limitations and risks of relevant genetic testing
- Coordinating genetic testing
- Providing follow-up counseling to discuss the test results and their implications
- Providing personalized cancer screening and prevention recommendations

## Who can benefit from cancer genetic testing?

Cancer genetic counseling is helpful for those with a personal and/or family history of:

- Early-onset cancer diagnosed before or at age 50
- Ovarian, pancreatic or male breast cancer
- Metastatic prostate or breast cancer

- The same or related cancers in two or more close family members (for example, colon cancer in a father and daughter)
- Multiple primary cancers in one individual (for example, a woman with two breast cancers or colon and uterine cancer)
- Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry and a personal or family history of breast, ovarian, prostate or pancreatic cancer
- Three or more invasive melanomas
- Ten or more colon polyps
- Rare pediatric tumors (for example, retinoblastoma, adrenocortical carcinoma)
- Abnormal tumor testing

## Will insurance cover the cost of genetic testing?

Genetic testing for hereditary cancer is typically covered by health insurance for people with suggestive personal and/or family histories of cancer. Your genetic counselor can discuss the likelihood of insurance coverage based on your personal and/or family history, as well as the options for verification of coverage. Self-pay options are also available.

## Can my insurance company discriminate against me if I have genetic testing?

Federal laws exist to protect patients from health insurance or employment discrimination on the basis of genetic information, including family history and genetic test results. Some laws provide protection only for those who do not have a personal history of cancer at the time of genetic testing. There is currently no direct evidence that people are experiencing health insurance discrimination associated with cancer genetic testing.

Importantly, current federal laws do not prohibit the use of family history or genetic test results by life insurers, long-term care insurers, or disability insurers when making decisions about a new or existing policy.

For additional information on this topic, visit the National Human Genome Research Institute's website at [Genome.gov/About-Genomics/Policy-Issues/Genetic-Discrimination](http://Genome.gov/About-Genomics/Policy-Issues/Genetic-Discrimination). Please let your genetic counselor know if you have further questions or concerns.

## Locations

### Fair Oaks

3580 Joseph Siewick Dr.  
Suite LL-005  
Fairfax, VA 22033

Telemedicine options are available  
for all appointments

To schedule an appointment call  
**571.472.0444**

### Fairfax

8081 Innovation Park Dr.  
Suite 255  
Fairfax, VA 22031



[Inova.org/Cancer-Genetics](https://www.inova.org/Cancer-Genetics)