

# Attachment D3: Materials for Testing with American Indian/Alaska Native Women

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# What Every Young Woman Needs to Know About Hereditary Breast & Ovarian Cancer

**1 in 8  
women**

will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her life.

**11% of  
women**

diagnosed with breast cancer in the US are younger than 45 years old.



# Breast Cancer in Young Women Can be Hereditary

Hereditary cancers run in your family and are caused by an inherited change in your genes. Breast cancer is less common in younger women than in older women, but young women are more likely to have hereditary breast cancer.



## BRCA Gene

BRCA stands for the **BR**east **CA**ncer gene. You have two BRCA genes—one from your mother and one from your father—which help the body prevent breast cancer.

## Everyone has BRCA Genes

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Some people have mutations—or changes in their BRCA genes—which **increase their risk** for breast, ovarian, and other cancers.

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1 IN EVERY  
**500**

women in the US has either a **BRCA1** or **BRCA2** gene mutation.

If one of your parents has a **BRCA gene mutation**,  
\_\_\_\_\_ you have a \_\_\_\_\_

**50%**  
**CHANCE**  
of also having the mutation.



BRING YOUR  
*brave.*



## You May Also Have a Higher Risk for a BRCA Mutation if

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- You—or any family members—have had breast cancer before **age 50**
- Multiple **relatives** have had breast cancer, or a male relative has had breast cancer
- You—or any family members—have had **ovarian cancer**
- You are of **Ashkenazi Jewish** descent and you or any family members have had breast or ovarian cancer
- A family member has a known **BRCA** mutation

## Why BRCA Mutations Matter

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**50%**  
— of —  
**WOMEN**

with a **BRCA1** or **BRCA2** gene mutation will develop **breast cancer** by the time they turn 70 years old, compared to 7% of women in the general US population.

**30%**  
— of —  
**WOMEN**

with a **BRCA1** or **BRCA2** gene mutation will develop **ovarian cancer** by the time they turn 70 years old, compared to less than 1% of women in the general US population.





## 3 Steps Young Women Can Take to Understand their Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer Risk

**1.**

**Learn your family history of breast or ovarian cancer.**

It may indicate you are at a higher risk.

**2.**

**Talk to a doctor to find out if you are at a higher risk.**

Your doctor can help you make a plan for managing your risk.

**3.**

**Know how your breasts normally look and feel.**

Talk to your doctor right away if you notice changes in the size or shape of your breast, pain, or nipple discharge.



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*brave.*



# Take Action to Lower Your Breast and Ovarian Cancer Risk

Knowing your cancer risk and being proactive about your health may help you take steps to lower your risk for getting breast or ovarian cancer, or find it at an early stage.

## Learn Your Family History of Cancer

Asking relatives about their cancer histories can be hard. Follow these tips:

1.

Share that you have learned that cancers can run in families.

2.

Write down who had cancer, age when diagnosed, and type of cancer.

3.

Word your questions carefully, be a good listener, and respect their privacy.

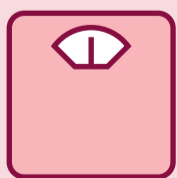
4.

Encourage family members to respond in a way that is most comfortable to them.

5.

Explain that you are creating a record of your family's history of cancer.

## Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices



Keep a healthy weight.



Exercise regularly.



Get enough nighttime sleep.



Limit alcohol intake.



Breastfeed your babies.





## Increase the chance of finding breast cancer early, when it's easier to treat.

- Know how your breasts normally look and feel.
- Talk to your doctor right away if you notice changes in your breast.
- Talk to your doctor if you have a higher risk, including a family history of cancer.



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*brave.*

# Understand Genetic Counseling and Testing

Genetic counseling and testing are recommended for women whose family medical history has certain patterns of cancer.

## What is Genetic Counseling?

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Genetic counseling can help you understand your risk based on your personal and family medical history.

### You will discuss things like:

- If a genetic test is right for you.
- Specific tests that might be used and their accuracy.
- Possible genetic test results and next steps.
- How a test result might not give you all the information you need.
- The emotional risks and benefits of genetic testing.
- How genetic test results may affect other family members.



### Did You Know?

Inherited mutations are thought to play a role in 5-10% of breast and 10-15% of ovarian cancers.

## What is Genetic Testing?

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Genetic testing helps you learn if your family history of breast cancer is due to a specific inherited gene mutation. It's done with a blood or saliva sample, at a doctor's office, hospital, or clinic.

### Understanding the Results

Genetic test results are a factor in determining overall risk.

Results can help you understand your risk of getting breast and ovarian cancers and steps you can take to reduce your risk.

A positive test result does not mean you will definitely get breast or ovarian cancer. If you test negative for a specific gene mutation, you still may be at an increased risk for breast or ovarian cancer.

