

Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University

Genetic Counseling Clinic

Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University's Genetic Counseling Clinic offers patients the most current information about hereditary cancer risk, cancer screening and treatment guidelines.

Through one-on-one consultation with a genetic counselor, patients can share their concerns about the cancer history in their family and receive personalized risk assessment and information about genetic testing options. Genetic counselors support families choosing to pursue genetic testing. Follow-up consultation includes discussing test results and the implications of results on cancer risks and medical management recommendations for patients and their family members.

Genetics and Cancer

Genes contain instructions for how our bodies will grow and function. Changes within our genes can lead to the development of cancer.

In some families, these genetic changes are inherited or passed down through generations. Approximately 5-10% of cancers are due to an inherited risk. People in families with a hereditary risk of cancer are born with a change in one of their genes (also known as a mutation or pathogenic variant) that gives them a higher chance of developing cancer.

Risk Factors for Hereditary Cancer

- The same or related types of cancer in two or more close relatives on the same side of the family (close relatives are parents, siblings, half-siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews).
- Cancer diagnoses in family members across multiple generations.
- Early age cancer diagnosis (under age 50).
- Individuals with multiple cancer types, multiple primary tumors or bilateral cancer, like cancer in both breasts.
- Rare types of cancer (e.g. male breast cancer).
- High-risk ethnicity (e.g. Ashkenazi Jewish).
- Specific patterns of cancer such as breast and ovarian or colon and uterine.

Genetic Testing

Our genetic counselors help patients determine if genetic testing is appropriate to understand their cancer risks. We discuss the benefits and limitations of genetic testing, then how the results could impact patients and their families.

Genetic counselors will also address issues that may influence a patient's decision to have genetic testing such as family dynamics, medical management of at-risk family members, confidentiality, insurance concerns and family planning.



Request an Appointment

Our genetic counselors are ready to meet to discuss the risk of cancer based on your family history.

To schedule an appointment, call 888-946-7447 or 404-778-1900.

Why Winship?

As Georgia's National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, we have the subspecialized, multidisciplinary teams to improve cancer care with an individualized treatment plan to meet each patient's specific needs.

At Emory, we are proud to be innovators and leaders in national and international clinical trials in cancer, making the latest treatments available to patients in Georgia and the Southeast. We offer patients our comprehensive resources and expertise, and we welcome consults.