

# Does Family History of Cancer Increases Your Risk of Developing Cancer? - Dr. Lalit Banswal

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## Is cancer hereditary?

Yes, some cancers are genetic or hereditary. They are seen more often in successive generations. A person with a family history of cancer has a higher risk of developing cancer.

What you need to know if more than one family member has contracted the cancer is to find out what type of cancer your family member (s) had and whether it is related to the risk of the family inheritance. Cancer is caused by gene effects and can be passed on from generation to generation, but the probability of it occurring in any blood ratio is not very high. There are also cancers that are not genetic or familial. Other factors such as eating habits, lifestyle such as smoking, and socioeconomic status can affect it.

## Cancer due to Gene Mutation:

About 3% to 10% of all cancers are genetic or hereditary. It is the result of a genetic mutation that is passed on from generation to generation. Cancers such as breast cancer, ovarian cancer, colon cancer, and uterine cancer are not commonly inherited, but people with a family history of cancer have a higher risk of developing cancer than others.

## Does every gene mutation cause cancer?

Not every genetic defect result in cancer. The genes whose defects cause cancer are called cancer susceptibility genes. People having mutations known as BRCA or p53 are especially prone to cancers. These gene mutations are tested among healthy family members by cancer specialists by [genetic screening](#).

Keep in mind that hereditary cancers and genetic cancers are not always the same although these terms appear to be synonymous. Most cancers have a genetic basis, due to a genetic mutation that is transmitted later in life.

## What to do if any blood relative has had cancer?

If in doubt, consult a cancer specialist in your area. These doubts may arise if more than one family member has the same type of cancer or if the family has had cancer caused by the same genetic mutation (for example breast and ovarian cancer in different family members).

If your [oncologist](#) suggests that you may have a genetic mutation after studying your family history, he or she may ask you to undergo genetic screening.