

Family Dialogue Tool



When close family members share the same health history, the risk for other relatives developing the same issues increases. So, it's critical for family members to talk about their health conditions and risks for inheriting certain diseases.

Use this **family dialogue tool** as a guide to help you have better conversations around health history. The sooner you know, the sooner you can take charge of your health and helping those you love with their health.

How to start a family health talk

Having one-on-one talks may allow for better, more meaningful conversations over large, family gatherings such as reunions.

Start by sharing something you have learned about your own health history with a close relative (such as parent or sibling). Next, ask them some of the questions below to keep the conversation going.

What should you be prepared to share?

- A new or existing clinical diagnosis
- Medications or treatments you are taking
- DNA-based health and ancestry reports
- Medical screenings such as imaging results
- Physical and psychological evaluations



What questions should you ask family members?

Use the space below to take notes. Ask if they are comfortable with you taking notes and, importantly, sharing the information with other family members.

- 1 What diseases or conditions, whether common or rare, run in our family?
- 2 How did deceased family members pass away? What age were they when they died?
- 3 Have you had any major medical conditions such as heart disease, strokes, or cancers?
- 4 Have you experienced any chronic conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, or high blood pressure?
- 5 Have you had any medical surgeries? Are you planning for more surgeries or procedures?
- 6 Do you experience any physical pain or discomfort? Do you have any unexplained pain?
- 7 What medications are you currently taking and for what conditions? Are they effective?
- 8 Is there any history of mental illness in our family? Did anyone attempt or commit suicide?
- 9 Is anyone seeing a specialist, for example, a cardiologist, nephrologist, oncologist, or nutritionist?
- 10 Is anyone on dialysis or waiting for an organ transplant? Do you wish to donate your organs?

You've had the family talk. Now what?

It's important to *share your family history discoveries* with your doctor. Based on your genetic health history, they may request diagnostic tests or more frequent screenings for certain conditions. See the companion form, [My Family Health History](#), to keep track of everyone in your immediate family.

Continue to have these talks as family health statuses change.

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