DeCesaris Cancer Institute Genetics Program
Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen during the appointment?
You will meet with a genetic counselor. She will review your medical and family history and discuss with you if the history is suggestive of hereditary cancer. She will assess your risk to develop cancer, and will outline various management options available to you. She will also discuss genetic testing if it is appropriate based on your history, and help you to decide if you would like to pursue testing.

How long does the appointment take?
You should allow for one and one-half hours, though most appointments last about one hour.

Can I bring family members or friends?
You are encouraged to bring a family member or friend if you would find it helpful. If you bring family members, though, please understand that this is your visit and we cannot discuss their medical history or make management recommendations for them. If they would like personalized recommendations, they must schedule their own appointment.

How much does the genetic counseling session cost and does insurance cover it?
The cost is $125.00. It is not billed through insurance, but you may submit the receipt to your insurance company for consideration of reimbursement. If you need assistance, please call our financial counselor at: 443-481-5327.

How much does genetic testing cost and does insurance cover it?
Genetic testing can range in cost from $300 to more than $3000, depending on the specific test. Many insurance companies do cover the cost of genetic testing if the patient’s personal or family history of cancer is suggestive of a hereditary cancer syndrome. If you are interested in genetic testing after you receive genetic counseling, we will help determine if testing is covered and will obtain authorization.

Does Medicare cover genetic counseling and genetic testing?
Medicare Part B (medical) covers some genetic tests. Coverage is determined based on age at cancer diagnosis and family history.

How is genetic testing done?
Genetic testing is usually a blood test. It does not require any special preparation, such as fasting.

Can I have the genetic test the same day as the appointment?
For those people who definitely want testing, we can typically order it at the end of the visit.
Do I have to have genetic testing?
The purpose of this visit is for genetic counseling. Some people choose to have genetic testing and others do not. For those who do not want testing, we will discuss overall cancer risk and management options.

How long does it take to receive the genetic test results?
The time it takes to receive genetic test results depends on what test is ordered. It can range from two weeks to two months, but typically averages about one month.

Can my insurance “drop me” if I have genetic testing?
There are federal and state laws that protect people with individually obtained and group health insurance plans from genetic discrimination. We will discuss this more during the appointment.