Dear Friends,

A **[genetic test](https://www.lfsassociation.org/patient-support/information/screening/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)** is an investment in your health that can help protect you from a heightened cancer risk. This early warning can be lifesaving by enabling you to take preventative measures.

Did you know elevated risk for cancer may be inherited due to variants in genes passed down from parents? A genetic test can identify if you have a genetic variant that may increase your risk of certain cancers. Do you have any of these concerns?

* **Family history of cancer:** Consider a genetic test if three or more people in your family have been diagnosed with the same type of cancer or if you or a close relative has been diagnosed with a rare type of cancer.
* **Early-onset cancer:** Cancers typically strike older adults. Consider a genetic test if you or a member of your family has been diagnosed with a childhood cancer or an adult cancer before age 50.
* **Multiple cancers:** Consider a genetic test if you or a member of your family has been diagnosed with two or more separate cancers, especially if the first cancer occurred before age 50.

For more information, ask your care provider for a referral to a healthcare provider with expertise in genetics. You can connect with a genetic counselor at **[The National Society of Genetic Counselors](https://findageneticcounselor.nsgc.org" \t "_blank)** or **contact LSFA** for answers to your questions.

Recognizing whether you have a heightened risk allows you to have better options for earlier detection and even possible prevention of some cancers. A genetic test is empowering. It enables you to make informed decisions and, when necessary, develop a personalized plan for monitoring your health and taking proactive steps in concert with your care provider. Knowing if there is a genetic variant in your family may help your family members also access appropriate genetic testing and follow-up care.

Importantly, a genetic test may also provide peace of mind if you learn you do not have a genetic variant.

Genetic testing should be performed by a healthcare provider with specific knowledge of cancer genetics, such as a Genetic Counselor, who can help you interpret your genetic testing results and best plan for care based on those results. Health insurance typically covers genetic counseling and genetic tests when it is medically necessary. Uninsured individuals can access affordable genetic testing through testing companies and other programs that offer subsidized programs. A Genetic Counselor or healthcare provider knowledgeable in genetics can help you access these services and answer any questions.

Knowledge about genetics is rapidly accelerating. Learn more **[here](https://www.lfsassociation.org/inherited-cancer/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**, **contact us** or **[talk with a genetics expert](https://findageneticcounselor.nsgc.org" \t "_blank)** about the progress being made in testing, diagnosing, and treating cancer in its many forms.

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