

How Your DNA Can Inform Your Health

DNA is like a tiny instruction book inside almost every cell in your body. It helps guide characteristics like your eye color and how your body processes food. It can also affect:

- how likely you are to develop certain health conditions like cancer or heart disease
- how you respond to certain medications
- how likely it is that your child could inherit certain conditions

Your Genomic Life membership includes access to three types of genetic screenings. Most people don't need them all at the same time—each is meant for specific times in your life or when you have specific questions, when the results can do the most good for you.

Members can take our online Health Questionnaire to see if one (or more) of the DNA screenings is right for them. Possible suggestions include:

Genetic Health Screen

This test detects tiny changes in your DNA that can increase your risk of more than 100 conditions including:

Cancer

- Breast cancer
- Colon cancer
- Ovarian cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Prostate cancer

Heart conditions

- Aortopathies (problems with how the body's largest artery functions)
- Arrhythmias (irregular or abnormal heart rhythms)
- Cardiomyopathies (heart muscle problems)
- Genetic forms of high cholesterol

Other conditions

- Inherited diabetes
- Iron overload disorders
- Metabolic disorders



If you're at increased risk for any of the conditions listed here, your care team can take steps to help decrease your risk. That might include super-charged screening schedules, medications meant to avoid or delay the onset of a condition, or lifestyle changes.

If your result does show increased risk, you won't be left wondering what it means. Genomic Life's [navigation team](#) will reach out to explain the results in understandable language, help coordinate care, and answer any questions you may have.

If your result doesn't show higher-than-average risk, that's helpful to know as well. It suggests your inherited risk looks more typical, but you still need to remember to stay up to date with routine care—like annual checkups, age-based screenings, and healthy habits.

Our program is designed to support you whether or not your results show increased risk, giving you confidence as you work with your care team on a care plan that fits your needs.

Pharmacogenomic Testing

This type of DNA testing may identify if some medications are more likely to work for you than others. It can also help your care team choose ones that may cause fewer side effects.

That's because your body processes medications using instructions contained in your DNA. If your body's instructions are different from the average person's instructions, you may not process certain medications in the usual way, making them not work as expected.

Testing your DNA for how you process medications, a practice called "pharmacogenomics," or PGx for short, can reduce the usual trial-and-error practice of prescribing medications. Instead of starting one medicine and waiting weeks or even months to see how it works, your care team can know ahead of time what's likely to work for your body. That might be a partial dosage, an increased dosage, or even a completely different medication.

PGx testing may be right for you if:

- You're starting a new medication for mental health, high cholesterol, severe pain, stomach acid, or bleeding/clotting disorders
- You take five or more medications
- You are experiencing strong side effects from current medications

Carrier Screening

While most babies are born healthy, with every pregnancy there is a small chance of having a baby with a genetic disorder. Carrier screening can uncover your and your partner's risk of passing an inherited genetic condition to your child.

If you are a carrier of a genetic change, it means that you have a change in one copy of a gene that increases your risk of your child inheriting the associated disorder. For most



disorders, both you and your reproductive partner must be carriers for your children to be at increased risk.

Carriers for genetic conditions are typically healthy and don't have symptoms. What's more, carriers often don't have any family members with the condition. Carrier screening helps you know your risk in advance, so you can make the right family planning decisions for you and your family.

If you're ready to start or grow your family, carrier screening may be for you and your reproductive partner.

Additional Information

[Learn more about possible genetic results and next steps here.](#)