

Genetic Testing for Bladder Cancer

Talking to Your Doctor



When cells of the bladder grow abnormally, they can become bladder cancer. A person with bladder cancer will have one or more tumors or growths in their bladder. You may have heard that genetics (the genes in your DNA) can play a role in a person developing cancer. As a result, genetic testing has emerged as a way to identify a person's risk for bladder cancer. If you've been diagnosed with bladder cancer, or if you have a close family member who's been diagnosed, genetic testing can tell you a lot.

By learning more about genetic testing for bladder cancer, you may feel more ready to talk with your doctor. Your health care team is a great resource, and they appreciate your questions.

Tips to Help You Get Started

At many stages in the cancer journey, you can learn if genetic tests may help. It's never a bad time to ask your doctor about it.

Here are a few questions you may wish to ask your health care team:

- Is genetic testing right for me?
- How will my genetic test results be used?
- Who will be performing the tests?
- Will genetic testing require a biopsy, a blood draw or urine sample?
- What are the next steps for me after testing is complete?
- What should my family know about my genetic results?
- What are my cancer treatment options based on genetic findings?

How Genetic Test Results May Help Doctors Manage Bladder Cancer

When concerned about cancer, genetic testing may be used to look for certain abnormalities (mutations) a person may have been born with or genetic changes that may have happened later in life. An abnormal genetic test result may mean there is an increased cancer risk or may offer details on the cancer aggressiveness. The presence of these mutations may allow a patient to have newly approved therapies or sign up for clinical trials.

Genetic testing may help identify risk of bladder cancer early. If your results show genetic changes for bladder cancer, you may be a good fit for a specific treatment. Because genetic testing can help find what treatments may be good for you, these are sometimes called precision or tailored therapy, rather than using a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Why Talking with Your Doctor May Help

Doctors who work with bladder cancer patients often may be able to tell you about treatment options based on genetic test results. For example:

- Patients with TMB mutations may benefit from a clinical trial with immunotherapy.
- Patients with the FGFR gene mutations could benefit from an FDA-approved oral therapy called erdafitinib.

Also, genetic testing may allow family members with inherited genetic risks to be screened earlier. If your doctor is not familiar with genetic testing, ask if they can recommend a specialist who is.



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About the Urology Care Foundation

The Urology Care Foundation is the world's leading urologic foundation – and the official foundation of the American Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make health changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts.

To learn more, visit the Urology Care Foundation's website, UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions.

Disclaimer

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. It is not to be used or relied on for that purpose. Please talk to your urologist or health care provider about your health concerns. Always consult a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications.

