

national society
of genetic
counselors, inc.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF GENETIC COUNSELORS RECOMMENDS THREE QUESTIONS MEN SHOULD ASK ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER

CHICAGO – June 2, 2008 – This Father’s Day the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) urges every man to ask three key questions about his risks for prostate cancer – the most common cancer for American men other than skin cancers – and recommends meeting with a genetic counselor if they are considering genetic testing for the disease.

“Genetic tests for prostate cancer can help save lives, but they can also raise more questions than answers,” said Angela Trepanier, NSGC president. “It is important that someone who has expertise in genetics helps you understand and interpret your risks, options and the impact that test results could have on you and your family.”

NSGC recommends every man ask three key questions:

1. What could put me at risk for prostate cancer?

If you have one close relative with prostate cancer, such as a brother or a father, your risk of developing prostate cancer over your lifetime is twice the normal risk. This risk is higher if the relative was diagnosed at an early age (before age 70). Other risk factors include age, race and diet. A genetic counselor can help you better understand your individual risks and options.

2. Is genetic testing for prostate cancer available?

Yes. However, commercial genetic testing for prostate cancer is not widely recommended, may not always provide straightforward answers, and may not be appropriate for the majority of individuals with prostate cancer. Talk with your genetic counselor to identify the right genetic test for you. To find a genetic counselor in your area, visit www.nsgc.org.

3. If I decide to pursue genetic testing, what should I expect from the process?

Not all cases of prostate cancer are alike, which makes genetic testing for this disease complex. Multiple genes and environmental factors play a role in developing the disease, and the genes that cause prostate cancer can vary depending on a person’s race or ethnic background. Discuss with your genetic counselor which test(s) specifically address your medical concerns.

About the National Society of Genetic Counselors

NSGC is the leading voice, authority and advocate for the genetic counseling profession. Membership represents more than 2,300 masters-level health professionals, most of whom provide direct patient care (totaling over one million visits per year). Members are employed in a wide range of clinical care, academic, research and biotechnology settings, and are located in every state of the U.S. and internationally. The organization is committed to ensuring that the public has access to genetic counseling and genetic testing. Visit NSGC at www.nsgc.org.

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