

GENETIC TESTING NOW AVAILABLE AT JPA

What is Genetics? Genetics is a field of science that tracks how individual traits are passed down from parents to children through their genes, i.e., eye color, hair color, height, etc. Changes in genes, called mutations, can also affect whether a person is likely to develop certain diseases, such as breast, ovarian, colon, prostate, uterine, gastric, renal and pancreatic cancer. Genetic information can help people determine cancer prevention plans.

Genetic testing is the use of medical tests to look for certain mutations in a person's genes. Although genetic testing can be used in many ways, we are focusing on its use in looking for gene changes linked to cancer so you can know more about your risk of developing cancer. Many people are at an increased risk for a particular cancer and don't even know it. The only way to know your risk is through genetic testing.

This type of testing is recommended if you have a family history of certain cancers to see if you carry a gene mutation that increases your risk. All relatives on both sides of the family (aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, parents, etc.) should be considered when determining if you have a family history of cancer.

Once you are tested, if it is determined that you are at an increased risk, your provider will give you a management plan. This may include earlier or more frequent screenings to help prevent the cancer you are at risk for or taking steps to lower your risk or catch it early.

The process for being tested begins by discussing the test with your JPA provider during a regular visit. During pre-test counseling, if you and your provider decide that a genetic test is appropriate for you, your provider will order the simple test conveniently through our on-site labs. Once your full report is generated (in 2 weeks or less), your provider will determine if additional post-test counseling is indicated.

This testing is covered for all Medicaid and Medicare patients and the testing entity (Natera) provides affordability programs so all patients, whether privately insured or uninsured, can have access to genetic testing.

