



To Our Mammography Patients at Diagnostic Radiology Associates

1. Why are you being asked to answer so many questions regarding personal and family medical history?

The doctors who provide the majority of breast care in the Waterbury area, including diagnosing and treating breast cancer, wish to have an effective way of identifying patients who are at high risk for developing breast cancer. Those physicians have asked Diagnostic Radiology Associates to help identify the high-risk patients, because so many of the Waterbury-area patients are seen annually at the time of their screening mammography. The questions we ask are designed to assess your risk for breast cancer and possible genetic predisposition. Although many breast cancers may occur on a random basis, some are associated with inherited genetic abnormalities that increase the chance of developing cancer.

2. Why is this assessment important to you?

The personal and family history questions you answered in the initial mammography questionnaire indicated that, compared to the average patient, you have an increased chance of having an inherited genetic abnormality that increases your risk for developing breast cancer. We recommend that you have genetic counseling for further evaluation and possible genetic testing. Your mammogram report will notify your referring doctor that we have recommended genetic counseling to you. If you eventually have genetic testing done, the results may be very important not only to you, but also to blood relatives, such as siblings and children, with whom you share genes, and who then might also want to have genetic counseling and testing.

3. Why are you being asked to fill out a second questionnaire?

The additional questions give more detailed information about your breast cancer risk. A copy of this risk assessment will be given to you so you can share it with a genetic counselor, and a copy will be faxed to your referring physician so that he/she will know why a counseling recommendation has been made.

4. What will be done if you are at increased risk for breast cancer because of a genetic abnormality and/or high lifetime risk assessment?

Depending on your specific situation, your doctor may recommend that you see a specialist, have additional testing (such as more frequent breast exams, breast ultrasound or MRI), take preventive medication, or even have surgery.

5 What should you do?

Make an appointment for genetic counseling. Arrange this by calling your referring doctor, but allow several days for his/her receipt of your mammogram report and our recommendation. Counseling might be done by your doctor, or by others on the list of available counselors which you will be given.

If you have further questions, DRA staff or physicians would be happy to talk with you.

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