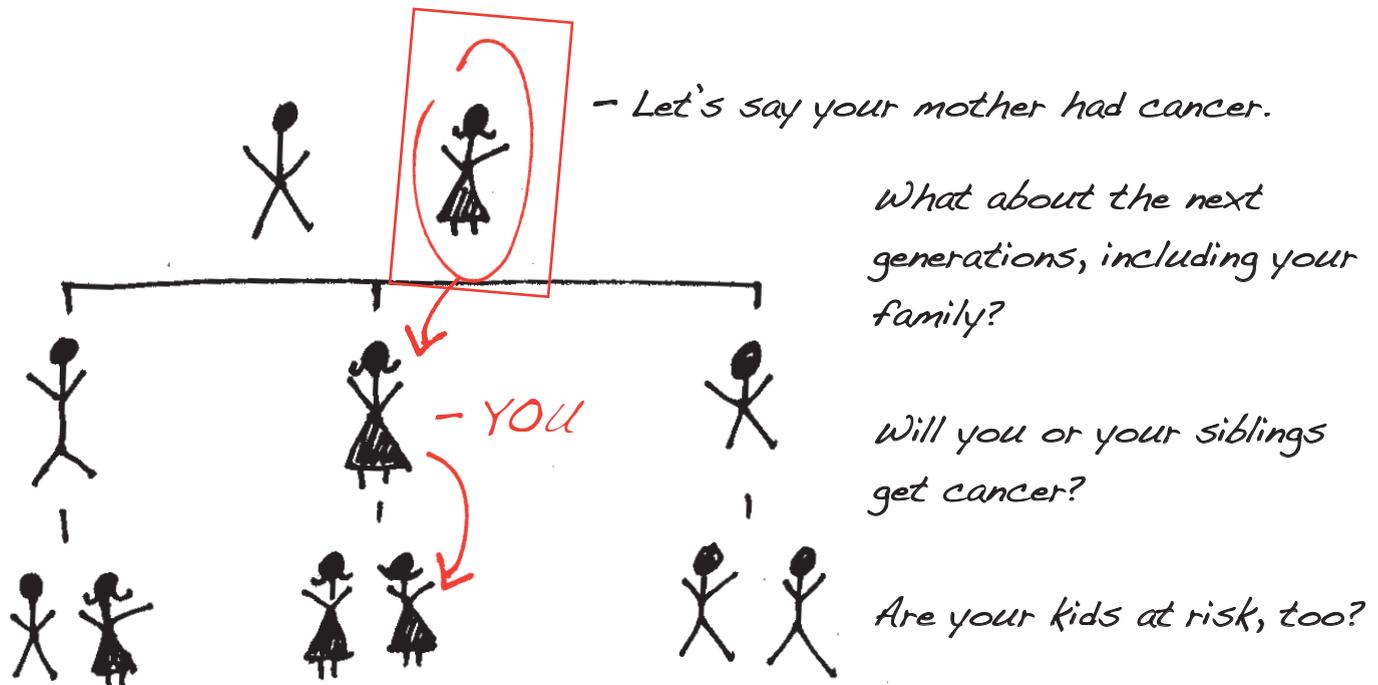


Does cancer risk run in your family?



★ The child of someone with a cancer genetic mutation has about a 50% chance of having that gene.

Four Attribution Factors of “Family Cancer”

In addition to genetics, environmental factors also influence cancer risk, such as unhealthy lifestyles and living environments. It is often seen that more than one family member has a same type of cancer. The common “family cancers” are lung cancer, nasopharyngeal cancer, liver cancer, etc.



Family Environment

If some one in a family smokes, others may be affected by second-hand smoke, increasing the risk of lung cancer. Family members who have the habit of eating betel nut are at higher risk to get oral cancer. Kitchen fumes and indoor formaldehyde pollution can also result in higher risk of lung cancer in the family.



Contagion

Cancer does not spread from one person to another, but some viruses and bacteria that cause cancer can be transmitted. For example, *Helicobacter pylori*, a potential danger of gastric cancer, can be transmitted through food sharing and saliva exchange. Hepatitis B virus is transmitted through mother-infant, blood, intimate contact, etc., thus increasing the risk of liver cancer in the family.



Genetics

The offspring of breast cancer patients are more likely to have a genetic predisposition, their chances to develop this disease are 2 to 3 times more than an average person. If parents have colon cancer caused by multiple colonic polyposis, their children may have up to 1 in 2 chance inheriting it; Lung cancer and prostate cancer are also known as hereditary cancers.



Lifestyle

Your family may have an impact on the way you eat, and unhealthy eating habits may increase the risk of developing cancer in a family. For example, habits like eating unfresh and moldy food, pickles, hot food or drinking hot tea, may cause repeated inflammation of the esophageal mucosa, which can gradually develop into esophageal cancer.