Familial Hypercholesterolemia

Genetic Testing: Information for Patients

What is familial hypercholesterolemia?

Familial hypercholesterolemia is a common genetic condition. People with this condition have higher levels of LDL, or the “bad” cholesterol. This can lead to a higher risk of heart disease and heart attack at a young age.

Who is at risk?

About 1 in 250 to 300 Canadians have familial hypercholesterolemia, though many people do not know they are affected.

Familial hypercholesterolemia runs in families. If a person has familial hypercholesterolemia, there is a 50% chance that each of their first-degree relatives (parent, child, sibling) will have it too.

There is no sex difference in the chance of having familial hypercholesterolemia.

Why is genetic testing important?

Identify at-risk relatives
Genetic testing identifies at-risk family members and enables early treatment.

Treatment and prevention
People with this condition can reduce their chance of heart disease through medications, lifestyle changes, and regular visits to their healthcare practitioners.

What can you do?

If your doctor tells you that you are eligible for familial hypercholesterolemia genetic testing, you can:

Connect with your local community lab for bloodwork. You will need your health card and the requisition provided by your doctor.

For more information:

Talk to your doctor about whether you are eligible for genetic testing for familial hypercholesterolemia.

Visit the Familial Hypercholesterolemia Canada registry for more information: **fhcanada.net**

Need this information in an accessible format? 1-877-280-8538, TTY 1-800-855-0511, info@ontariohealth.ca.

Document disponible en français en contactant info@ontariohealth.ca.

Ontario Health