

Your Family's Health History

One of the first things a doctor or nurse performs at each check up/screening is a family health history. Knowing the illnesses or disorders that your immediate family members have can give a physician important information about *your* future health. For example, knowing that your father and grandfather have heart disease can put you at risk of having heart disease yourself. Upon learning this information, the doctor will likely discuss preventative measures to decrease your likelihood of getting heart disease too. They may also screen you for heart disease earlier than they would for other individuals without a family history of heart disease. The main goal of learning your family's health history is to keep you and your family healthy and disease free.

Part 1: Obtaining your Family's Health History

Directions:

Talk with your parents about their health. Find out if your mother or father take medication for any disorders. For example, high blood pressure, hypo/hyperthyroidism, heart disease, high cholesterol, etc. Then ask about your father's parents and your mother's parents. Is there a history of diabetes, cancer, heart attack, etc. Do your father's brothers or sisters take any medication? For what diseases/disorders? Do your mother's brothers or sisters take any medication? For what diseases/disorders?

Father's Health	Father's Parents	Father's Brothers	Father's Sisters
Mother's Health	Mother's Parents	Mother's Brothers	Mother's Sisters

Part II:

Obtaining your family's health history is a very important step in reducing the risks of getting some diseases. Go to the following website.

<http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/> , follow the link to Access the My Family Health Portrait Web tool

Here, you will be able to:

- Enter your family's health history
- Create drawings of your family's health history to share with your health care professional
- Share the history with your family members

After you have entered your family's health history, use the print out as a tool to inform your family members of health risks within your family. You can also take this print out to share with doctors or nurses at your next checkup!

Part III:

The purpose of obtaining a family health history is to 1.) Learn the diseases that you may be at risk for and 2.) Learn how to prevent these diseases.

Find 2 Resources that will help you learn more about these diseases. For example: American Cancer Society in Austin, or www.cdc.gov (Center for Disease Control)

Resource	How does this resource help the community reduce the risk of disease? (Example- offers free screenings, online courses, etc.)