

The University of Chicago Genetic Services Laboratories



5841 S. Maryland Ave., Rm. L035, MC 0077, Chicago, Illinois 60637
Toll Free: (888) UC GENES ♦ (888) 824 3637
Local: (773) 834 0555 ♦ FAX: (773) 834 0556
ucgslabs@genetics.uchicago.edu ♦ www.genes.uchicago.edu
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DNA Testing for Mutations of *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*

A woman has an 11-12% lifetime risk of developing breast cancer, and a 1% lifetime risk of developing ovarian cancer. Most cases of breast or ovarian cancer are sporadic; however, 5-10% of breast and ovarian cancers are hereditary. Two breast cancer susceptibility genes have been isolated, *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*, with germline mutations in these genes accounting for the majority of families with hereditary breast and/or ovarian cancer. The presence of a mutation in either *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* will increase an individual's lifetime risk of developing cancer to 60-85%.

The genes for *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* are located on chromosome 17 and chromosome 13, respectively. The hereditary forms of cancer due to mutations in *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* follow an autosomal dominant pattern of inheritance, meaning that an individual who has a mutation has an increased risk of developing cancer and a 50% chance of passing the gene to each of his or her children.

The Ashkenazi Jewish population has been found to have two common mutations in the *BRCA1* gene (185delAG and 5382insC) and one common mutation in *BRCA2* gene (6174delT). It is believed that these three mutations account for 26% of the mutations for breast and/or ovarian cancers in the Ashkenazi Jewish population¹. An incidence of 2-3% for one of these three common mutations has been identified in the general Ashkenazi Jewish population².

The University of Chicago Genetic Services Laboratories provide mutation analysis for the three common mutations found in the Ashkenazi Jewish population, as well as other known mutations in the *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genes (Customized Diagnostics). Because of the complexity of testing for hereditary cancers, laboratory verification of any previously identified mutation in a family is required before carrier testing can be performed on any relative at risk for carrying the mutation.

We will only perform testing within the context of genetic counseling prior to testing to discuss the sensitive issues surrounding presymptomatic testing and again following testing to discuss the implications of results. Please contact laboratory staff for information regarding cancer risk clinics in your area.

¹Krainer M, Silva-Arrieta S, FitzGerald MG, et. al. Differential contributions of *BRCA 1* and *BRCA 2* to early-onset breast cancer. *NEJM* 336(20): 1416-1421, 1997.

²Struewing JP, Hartge P, Wacholder S, Baker SM, Berlin M, McAdams M, Timmerman MM, Brody LC, Tucker MA. The risk of cancer associated with specific mutations of *BRCA 1* and *BRCA 2* among Ashkenazi Jews. *NEJM* 336(20): 1401-1408, 1997.

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>CPT Codes</u>	<u>Turn-Around-Time</u>
Testing for 3 Common Mutations of <i>BRCA1</i> and <i>BRCA2</i> in the Ashkenazi	\$450	83891, 83893, 83898(x2) 83894, 83912	2 - 4 weeks
Customized Diagnostics for <i>BRCA1</i> or <i>BRCA2</i> mutations	\$415	83891, 83898, 83904, 83894, 83912	2 - 4 weeks

Please contact UCGS staff if you have any questions.