

## **How Family Health History Promotes Wellness: Who Can I Talk To?**

Your primary care provider is a good person to start the conversation about family history.

- He/she may be able to discuss general screening guidelines based on your personal family history.
- You may need additional screening above that which is recommended for the general population based on your family history.
- Additionally, your primary care provider may refer you to a specialist if the risk is such that additional professional care is recommended.

A genetic counselor, a master's trained health care professional who specializes in assessing health risk based on family history, is also an important resource in your community. You may seek an appointment from a genetic counselor if you are concerned about your own health condition or one affecting other family member(s). Genetic counselors are trained to analyze your personal history and your family tree to assess whether a condition may be hereditary or is more likely to be sporadic. They may work in conjunction with your physicians to develop a personalized health care plan for you. To find a genetic counselor in your area, visit the National Society of Genetic Counselors at [www.nsgc.org](http://www.nsgc.org) and click on the "Find a Counselor" search tool. Medical geneticists (physicians) are also available (visit the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics at [www.acmg.net](http://www.acmg.net) to find a physician provider in your area).

Some individuals may also seek guidance from specialists if a genetic counselor is not available. For instance, talk to your OB-Gyn if you are concerned about your family history of breast, ovarian, or uterine cancer. If you see a cardiologist, talk to them about your family history of heart disease.