

New Genetic Tests For Cancer Now Available In The UK

In the Western world, more women than ever before are being diagnosed with breast cancer. As 10% of cancers are affected by an inherited gene, many people are keen to explore the use of genetic tests. Such tests can be used to find out if someone is at risk of developing cancer for the first time or if a previous cancer is likely to come back after being in remission. The results of such tests can reassure people who discover they are at low risk and help those at high risk of cancer, to decide with their physician upon the best management plan in order to lower the likelihood of developing cancer.

Preventative management plans may include more frequent screening, the use of certain medication, or in some instances, preventative surgery to remove one or both breasts and/or ovaries. There are various genetic tests available, however many will only look for one or two of the genes that are linked to breast cancer, unfortunately, as there are many genes linked to the development of cancer, such tests may fail to predict an increased risk in some people.

THE MYRISK™ TEST

Dr James Mackay, Consultant Clinical Genetic Oncologist, University College London and The London Breast Clinic, 108 Harley Street, is now using a new genetic test, manufactured in the US, for his patients who believe they have a high risk of breast cancer, due to a family history of cancer. The myRisk test looks at 25 genes linked to cancer from a blood sample. This, along with the individual's family history, creates a report showing your personal risk of developing not only breast and ovarian but also six other major cancers; colorectal, endometrial, pancreatic, prostate, gastric and melanoma. The myRisk test can provide a great relief to patients and their families as well as enabling proactive management and the most appropriate use of available treatments.

Knowing your family history of cancer is obviously very important in assessing hereditary risk, and it is essential that people look at their mother and father's history of all types of cancer, over more than one generation.

Dr James Mackay stated that "Many people do not realise that a family history of other cancers, such as prostate, may increase their risk of breast cancer. The myRisk test can reassure people that their risk is low, or enable them to be proactive in reducing the likelihood of developing cancer."

The myRisk test has been available in the US for 1 year, and during this time it has alleviated anxiety in many, and provided people with a greater understanding of what the future may hold for them. Last year, at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in the US, the myRisk test was shown to identify 51% more people at risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer than previous genetic tests. As part of the early introduction of myRisk into UK clinical practice, approximately 150 high risk families have been tested; the results so far suggest that using the myRisk test, rather than the genetic tests that would previously have been used in UK practice, can almost double the number of important cancer-causing mutations identified in high risk families that may otherwise go undetected.

James Mackay stated "We are delighted to be able to offer this test in the UK now."

THE ENDO PREDICT® TEST

Another new genetic test that has recently become available in the UK is called EndoPredict. This is a test for people recovering from surgery that they have undergone to cure breast cancer. EndoPredict is used to assess whether there is a high or low risk of the person developing secondary tumours, also known as metastases, and therefore whether or not the person should receive chemotherapy. Existing tests of this

kind, put people into a 'low', 'intermediate' or 'high' risk category, however receiving a result showing an 'intermediate' risk often causes some uncertainty, and many receive unnecessary chemotherapy as a precautionary measure. This is the first test of its kind to give a clear indication of risk, either 'high' or 'low'. The test was launched in the UK this year following its use in approximately 50 breast centres throughout Germany.

AVOIDING OVER-TREATMENT IN AROUND 50% OF PEOPLE

At last year's American Society of Clinical Oncology meeting, EndoPredict was shown to help around 50% of people safely avoid unnecessary chemotherapy, and therefore the unpleasant side effects that come with this kind of treatment. Likewise, EndoPredict can also identify those patients who would benefit from chemotherapy due to a high risk of developing secondary tumours.



For myRisk, please visit:
www.myriad.com

For EndoPredict,
please visit:

www.myriadgenetics.eu
T: 0207 544 8406

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If you wish to make an appointment with Dr James Mackay, please telephone his clinic on:

0207 563 1234 or

email: info@108harleystreet.co.uk

Myriad Genetics

Myriad Genetics is a leading molecular diagnostic company dedicated to making a difference in patients' lives through the discovery and commercialisation of transformative tests to assess a person's risk of developing disease, guide treatment decisions and assess risk of disease progression and recurrence.

For further information, please visit: www.myriadgenetics.eu.

Reimbursement

The myRisk test is reimbursable by many leading insurance companies.

Further reading

www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/incidence/ - Tung N et al. Prevalence of gene mutations among hereditary breast and ovarian cancer patients using a 25 gene panel. Poster presented at San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium - December 12, 2013. - Ettl J et al. Prospective comparison of uPA/PAl-1 and EndoPredict-clin score in the management of primary ER-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer: Impact on risk stratification and treatment decisions. ASCO Annual Meeting 2013 (poster presentation).