

Bad

Luck or



Bad

Genes?

### Facts about Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer (HBOC)

- This year an estimated 22,300 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 5,300 will die of it. An estimated 2,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in Alberta/NWT and 440 will die of it.
- This year, an estimated 2,400 Canadian women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer and 1,600 will die of it.
- 5-10 percent of these cancers can be attributed to hereditary risk (i.e. hereditary breast and ovarian cancer). In Alberta, an estimated 200 women will be diagnosed with hereditary breast cancer this year. Many of these women will be diagnosed before the age of 50.
- There are two genes, BRCA1 and BRCA2, which are known to carry mutations that can be responsible for some hereditary breast cancer and some hereditary ovarian cancer.
- Both men and women can pass on hereditary cancer risk to their children.
- Children have a 50% chance of inheriting a gene mutation from a carrier parent.
- Individuals from families with a known inherited gene mutation are deemed "high-risk" for developing cancer and can be tested for the mutation.
- HBOC can be devastating for families because cancers tend to occur at earlier ages than sporadic cancer and can be much more prevalent. Their needs and issues are complex.



**HBOC**  
Hereditary Breast and Ovarian  
Cancer Society of Alberta

• EMPOWERING FAMILIES •

## Risks for Families with HBOC

Type Of Cancer	Risk In General Population	Brca1 Carrier	Brca2 Carrier
breast cancer - women	12%	47-66%	40-57%
ovarian cancer	1-2%	35-46%	13-23%
breast cancer - men	0.3%	small increase	up to 6%
prostate cancer	12%	small increase	up to 35%
other cancers		slight increase	slight increase

### Red Flags for HBOC

What to look for in your family history to determine if you may be a "high risk" family:

- Multiple individuals with breast and/or ovarian cancer
- Individuals with breast cancer in both breasts
- Breast and ovarian cancer in the same individual
- Individuals with breast cancer at age 40 or younger
- Breast or ovarian cancer in a family with Ashkenazi Jewish heritage

If you suspect hereditary breast or ovarian cancer, talk to your family doctor about a possible referral to the Medical Genetics Clinic closest to you.

### Myths about HBOC

- "My mother had breast (ovarian) cancer so now I'm going to get it!"

**No.** There are many different scenarios that suggest varying degrees of risk for daughters of affected mothers. Even in the highest risk situation, many women will never get cancer during their lifetime.

- "The cancer is on my Dad's side, so I'm okay."

**No.** Men can be carriers of genetic mutations and can pass them on to their children. The only difference is that the cancer may not present itself in men.

For more information, contact:

Hereditary Breast Ovarian Cancer (HBOC) Society of Alberta  
#114, 11728 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5B 0X5  
Ph: 780-488-HBOC (4262) Toll Free: 1-866-786-HBOC (4262)  
Fax: 780-488-4252

E-mail: [hbocsociety@telus.net](mailto:hbocsociety@telus.net)  
Website: [www.hbocsociety.org](http://www.hbocsociety.org)

