

HEALTHcare

Briefs

Genetics And Breast Cancer

Sharsheret, a breast cancer advocacy group, offers genetic analysis and genetic counseling prior to actual testing.

Much to the surprise of many women, most breast cancers are not inherited.

Ninety to 95 percent of breast cancers are sporadic. However, 5 to 10 percent of the time, there may be indications in the personal and family history suggestive of an inherited predisposition to breast and other cancers. Therefore, it is important to become familiar with one's family history, both on the maternal and paternal sides.

Inherited breast cancer is due to alterations in at least two genes, BRCA 1 and BRCA 2. Ashkenazi Jewish women are more likely to carry a mutated gene than women in the general population.

Genetic analysis is a process that involves risk assessment, and genetic counseling prior to actual testing can assist women in their quest for information and assessment.

To learn more about Genetics and Breast Cancer, contact Niecee Schonberger, Sharsheret's Genetic Counselor, at (866) 474-2774 or visit www.sharsheret.org.