Ten percent of women in New Zealand will suffer from breast cancer... and for five percent of that group it will be in their genes.

If Breast and/or Ovarian Cancer runs in your family, an estimation of the likelihood that your family has a hereditary predisposition to develop cancer can be obtained with a Cancer Risk Assessment conducted by Canterbury Breastcare.

If you require further information about Hereditary Breast Cancer, ask your doctor or phone Canterbury Breastcare on (03) 355 1194, our staff will be happy to help you.

The Canterbury-West Coast division of the Cancer Society offers a range of information and support services throughout the region.

The Society's offices are at 246 Manchester Street, Christchurch, phone (03) 379 5835.
Hereditary breast cancer

Up to 5% of all breast cancer is hereditary, caused by germline mutations in genes conferring susceptibility to breast and ovarian cancer.

These genes are called BRCA1 and BRCA2 and a mutation of one of these genes is carried by about 1 in every 400-800 people.

Mutations in these genes are associated with a high risk of breast and ovarian cancer and may require increased surveillance with a breast surgeon and the option of risk-reducing surgical management.

What is Cancer Risk Assessment?

Cancer risk assessment involves the process of identifying individuals and families at risk for a hereditary cancer syndrome.

Family history analysis is used in conjunction with Genetic Software and review of tumour histology to determine whether a family is suspected of having hereditary cancer or sporadically occurring cancer.

This analysis can help in quantifying risks to individual family members.

It also helps in determining if genetic testing is appropriate for the family, and if so, which family member would be the appropriate individual to start mutation searching in.

A uniquely supportive environment

Canterbury Breastcare offers a uniquely supportive environment where women receive a complete breast health care service under one roof.

The combined skills of a range of specialists and health professionals at Canterbury Breastcare are committed entirely to breast health care - from screening and diagnostic breast imaging to the integrated management of breast problems.

The multi-disciplinary team comprising Radiologists, Surgeons, Oncologists, Genetic Associate, Pathologists, Breast Nurse Specialists and Radiographers (MRTs) delivers a caring and professional service to assess all your breast concerns efficiently at one site.

Once a diagnosis is made, appropriate treatment options can be discussed and offered. This may include surgery or on-going surveillance and clinical management.

How can I make an appointment?

You can call Canterbury Breastcare on (03) 355 1194 to make an appointment, or your GP, Surgeon or Oncologist may also refer you.

It is a good idea to find out as much information as you can about any close relative's cancer history (e.g. type of cancer, cause and age at death) as you are likely to be asked this at your appointment.

What happens to my results?

Written documentation of the Cancer Risk Assessment would be supplied to you and your doctors.

For more information

Call Canterbury Breastcare on (03) 355 1194, or visit our website, www.breastcare.co.nz