

What to expect from a cardiovascular genetic counseling session:

- Plan to spend about 2 hours on your first visit
- More than one visit may be necessary
- Feel free to bring a family member or close friend with you for support
- You and your health care provider will be provided with a letter that summarizes the information discussed

The Genetic Counseling Program, Mohawk Valley Genetic Services, North Country Genetics Service, and Capital District Adult Genetics Program are programs of the Ferre Institute, Inc.

For more information or to make an appointment for genetic counseling at any of our locations, please call 607-724-4308 or toll free 1-888-483-3773.

Fees for this consultation vary with the degree of case review. The staff would be glad to discuss this prior to your appointment. Sliding scale fee is available.

**GENETIC COUNSELING PROGRAM/
FERRE INSTITUTE, INC.
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**
124 Front Street
Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone 607-724-4308 Fax 607-724-8290

MOHAWK VALLEY GENETIC SERVICES
4 Oxford Crossing
New Hartford, NY 13413
Phone 315-724-4348 Fax 315-724-1360

NORTH COUNTRY GENETICS SERVICE
Potsdam, NY

**CAPITAL DISTRICT ADULT GENETICS
PROGRAM**
Albany, NY
Schenectady, NY

Visit us online:

- www.Ferre.org
- www.FerreGenetics.org
- www.GeneticHelpDesk.com
- www.HeartGenes.org
- www.MohawkValleyGene.org
- www.NYSGeneticCounselors.org
- www.ResponsibleGeneticTesting.org
- www.PregnancyRiskNetwork.org

Ferre Institute, Inc.

Comprehensive
Community Based
Genetic Services

*Heart and Genes
Inherited Heart
Disease and Familial
Cardiovascular Risk
Assessment*

Community Based and Community Supported

Is my family at risk for heart problems?

A genetic counselor can help you understand possible risks for early heart disease. An assessment of your genetic/inherited risk can help your doctor make a diagnosis and plan for your care. The counselor will review your medical records and consult with your doctor.

The genes we all inherit from our parents provide a blueprint for the functioning of our bodies. A large number of genes have very specific influences on heart and blood vessel function. Some genes exert direct effects on the heart and blood vessels, while other genes require a stimulus from environmental factors and lifestyle choices.

Risk assessment and gene testing, when appropriate, can help individuals understand the underlying cause of their early heart disease and the pattern of family heart disease. Individuals with identified inherited heart disease will also learn about new recommendations and treatments if available.

During our meeting, we will carefully review your personal and family history of heart and blood vessel disease. We will focus on relatives who have experienced heart disease or early death. If needed, we will review their medical records (if available) to assist in identifying a genetic condition. In some families, the information may be limited, but we will consider the information that is available.

(continued)

(continued)

The first meeting takes about one to two hours. We encourage you to bring family members to your session. Our consultation will consider your specific risk in the context of your family. The information you learn may very well benefit your relatives.

If gene testing is appropriate, and you choose to proceed, we will assist in coordinating these studies for you and your doctor. You and your physician will be provided with a letter reviewing the consultation. Genetic counseling does not obligate you to have genetic testing.

What if I have an inherited risk for heart disease?

If your assessment reveals an inherited risk the genetic counselors can help you in the following ways:

- Review available genetic tests (usually simple blood test).
- Research new tests and review progress for families with inherited heart disease.
- Send your genetic risk assessment to your physician, who may decide to change your care or discuss treatment options.

If gene testing is performed we will meet with you again to review the gene test results, how the new information can be used in your personal health plans, and how your relatives may benefit from the information.

How can a genetic counseling consultation help?

The genetic counselor will:

- Provide you and your doctor with a careful review of your family history, personal history, and common risk factors
- Discuss the roles that genes and environment have on your personal and family heart disease history.
- Discuss the role of any available testing for certain cardiovascular predisposition genes.
- Determine if your family history supports an inherited heart disease risk.
- Explain how early identification of an inherited risk can prevent or delay the symptoms of heart disease.
- Assist your family in taking important steps in prevention of heart disease and early death.

Genetic counselors are specially trained health professional with an advanced degree and experience in the highly specialized area of medical genetics. To learn more about Genetic Counseling visit: www.nysgeneticcounselors.org