

MY FAMILY HEALTH PORTRAIT

The U.S. Surgeon General recommends that all people learn more about their family health histories. With this information, you and your health care provider can make a plan to help prevent conditions for which you may be at higher risk. This tool helps you organize family history information to share with your health care provider.

What do I need to do before I fill out MY FAMILY HEALTH PORTRAIT?

- **Talk with your relatives.**

Explain to your relatives that knowing about their health history can help improve ways to screen for and help prevent diseases for **ALL** family members. The most important relatives to talk to are your parents, your brothers and sisters, half-brothers or half-sisters, and nieces and nephews.

- **Ask about any health problems your relatives have had.**

Ask about heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer (especially colon, breast, or ovarian cancers) and at what age the illness was first diagnosed. If a relative died of that condition, ask about how old they were when they died.

If a relative is no longer living, ask other relatives who might know about his or her health history. For example, if your mother's mother died from an unknown condition in her 40's, you should find out if any other family members know why she died, and what other health conditions she had.

- **Use the chart in this tool to record the health information your family members give you.**

- **Give the collected information to your health care provider.**

- **Save a copy of this tool for yourself, or create an online version at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/familyhistory/>.**

The U.S. Surgeon General's Family History Initiative



The U.S. Surgeon General's Family History Tool
is also available at:

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/familyhistory/>

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