

Family History

*It's connected
to your health*

Know your history • Get Connected • Change your future!

Sharing your family health history can help your doctor identify:

- diseases for which you may be at increased risk.
- changes you can make to reduce your risk and your children's risk of developing disease.



My Family Health Portrait,
www.hhs.gov/familyhistory
created by the U.S. Surgeon
General's office

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Tips for collecting family health history

- **Talk to relatives.** They may refer you to the "family historian". Often older relatives are the best source of information about family.
- **Thanksgiving Day is National Family History Day.** Take the time to talk about your family history at family gatherings.
- **Collect information on your blood relatives** (self, parents, brothers/sisters and half brothers/sisters, children, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews and cousins).
Include:
 - ▼ Name and how they are related to you (half-brother, child, etc.). Include which side of the family (mom or dad).
 - ▼ Ethnic background, race and origins of family
 - ▼ Date of birth (or best guess – such as "1960's")
 - ▼ Major medical problems
 - ▼ If a person has died, their age at death and cause of death
- If you are adopted, seek family health history information through your adoptive parents or adoption agency records.
- Organize your family history using My Family Health Portrait, an online tool (www.hhs.gov/familyhistory) created by the U.S. Surgeon General's office.
- Update your family history often and share it with your doctors and your family.

