

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far



Understanding Your Family Medical History

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.

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, siblings, half siblings, 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.
- **Update your family history often and share it with your doctors and your family.**



**Department of
Health**