



Genetic Counseling and Working with an Interpreter

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Learning Objectives

- Describe a typical genetic counseling session and modalities of genetic counseling
- Describe what takes place during a genetic counseling session
- Address questions that individuals might have before genetic counseling
- Describe the role of an interpreter in genetic counseling sessions and strategies for working with interpreters



Karen Brown's Bio

- New York Native
- BS in Human Development from Cornell University
- MS in Genetic Counseling from Sarah Lawrence College
- Assistant Professor, Department of Genetics & Genomic Sciences and Director, Cancer Genetic Counseling Program at Mount Sinai



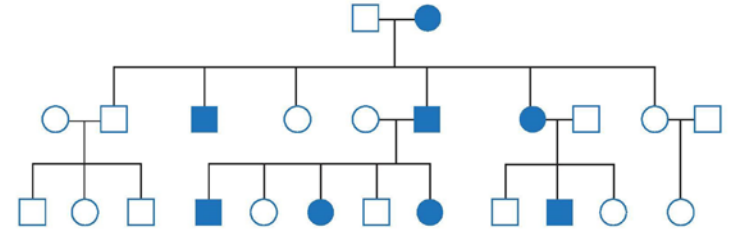
What is genetic counseling?

- Official definition: Genetic counseling is the process of helping people understand and adapt to the medical, psychological and familial implications of genetic contributions to disease. This process integrates the following:
 - **Interpretation** of family and medical histories to assess the chance of disease occurrence or recurrence.
 - **Education** about inheritance, testing, management, prevention, resources and research.
 - **Counseling** to promote informed choices and adaptation to the risk or condition.
- GCs are master's trained and nationally certified
- Services provided in-person, via telemed, via phone consults
- GC may specialize in cancer, prenatal, general, cardio, etc.



What happens in a pre-test genetic counseling session?

- Contracting
 - Establish a shared agenda
- Review of the medical & family history
 - Pedigree
- Risk assessment
 - Characteristics of families with hereditary cancer predisposition
- Discussion of genetic testing (if appropriate)
 - Genes to test
 - Possible test results
 - Cost and insurance
 - Time to results
 - Concerns about insurance discrimination
- Informed consent for testing
- Sample collection

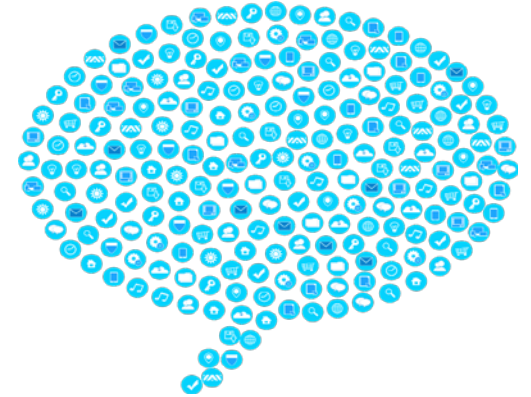


Address psychosocial issues



What happens in a post-test genetic counseling session?

- Give results
 - Over phone or in-person
- Discuss results
- Psychosocial counseling
 - Especially if positive
- Discuss recommendations for cancer screening and options for prevention
 - Make referrals and offer resources
- Discuss testing of family members (if appropriate)



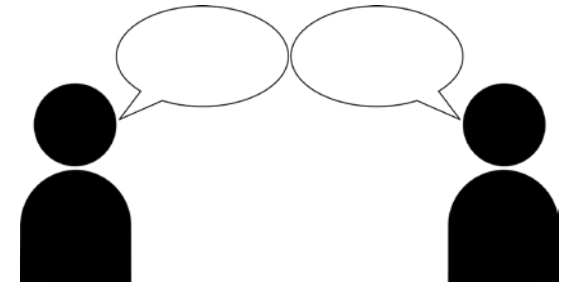
Julie Gold's Bio

- New York Native
- BS in Human Development from Cornell University
- MS in Genetic Counseling from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- Cancer Genetic Counselor at Mount Sinai



Modalities of genetic counseling

- Most genetic counseling sessions are in-person
- Some genetic counseling may be remote
 - Telephone
 - Audio and video (like Skype or Facetime)
 - Might be through a third-party company



Tele-Genetic Counseling

Pros

- Convenience
- Connect with Spanish-speaking genetic counselor
- Possibly less wait-time



Cons

- Less personal touch
- May require access to certain technology
- May not be able to use visual aids for explanations
- Coordination of sample collection for testing



What questions do patients have before genetic counseling?

Group Participation!

- What questions can you imagine members of your community would have if you recommended seeing a genetic counselor?
- What questions might you have if you were thinking about seeing a genetic counselor?



What questions do patients have before genetic counseling?

- What is genetic counseling?
- What is genetic testing?
- Will my insurance cover genetic testing?
 - If I don't have insurance, can I get tested?
 - What does the testing cost?
 - What does the genetic counseling session cost?
- If I have genetic counseling, do I have to have genetic testing?
- If I test positive, will my health insurance be affected?
- Why do you need all this information about my family?
- Why should I get tested if I already had cancer?
- Isn't it just a blood draw?
- Do I have to have surgery (mastectomy, hysterectomy, etc.) if I test positive?



Giselle Lopez-Ingram's Bio

- Born and raised in Managua, Nicaragua
- B.A. in International Relations
- Certified Medical Interpreter by National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters
- Language Coordinator at Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens
- Loves books, chocolate and medieval fairs



How is the session different with Latin@s?

- Like with any other patient, all genetic counseling sessions are tailored to the patient
 - Education/knowledge
 - Culture
 - Family situation → Companions have a voice, too
 - Language
 - Questions
 - Needs
- When it is necessary to include the services of an interpreter, the session will take longer, so it would be appropriate to schedule accordingly



Working with a qualified interpreter

- What is **translation**?
- What is **interpretation**?
- **Interpreting modalities** in genetic counseling
 - Live vs. remote interpreting (phone, video)
- What can the patient and counselor expect when there is an interpreter?
 - Providing all necessary information during the session will take longer than if conducted exclusively in English
 - It is important to pause with frequency
 - Use descriptive words



Working with a qualified interpreter, continued

- Due to their training, the interpreter will interpret everything that is said out loud in the room
 - Don't hold side conversations or say anything you don't want interpreted
 - The interpretation will be faithful, and complete and will not include additions, omissions or personal opinions
- Interpreters interpret meaning for meaning, not word for word
- The patient should **advocate** for himself or herself. Ask for clarification or repetition if something is not clear. Having an interpreter in the room is no guarantee of understanding (tools like teach-back should be used to make sure that the patient understands)



Example of a Session in an Office

- <https://youtu.be/pVm27HLLiiQ>

