

USPSTF: BRCA testing for women with family history

2 April 2013



The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genetic testing be limited to women whose family histories are associated with an increased likelihood of having *BRCA* mutations.

(HealthDay)—The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genetic testing be limited to women whose family histories are associated with an increased likelihood of having *BRCA* mutations.

Researchers from the USPSTF reviewed the evidence to assess whether genetic counseling and testing could be effective for identifying women who are most likely to have mutations in *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* genes. Noting that current tests often yield inconclusive results, the evidence suggests that women whose family histories are not associated with an increased risk for *BTRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutations should not undergo genetic counseling or testing. Women who have family members with breast or [ovarian cancer](#) should undergo screening to identify whether their family history is associated with having *BRCA* mutations. Women who screen positive should be offered [genetic counseling](#) and, if indicated, should receive the test after adequate consideration of the pros and cons of testing.

The draft Recommendation Statement is available for comment from April 2 to April 29, 2013.

"At this point, scientific evidence only shows that *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* testing is beneficial for women who have reviewed their family history of breast or ovarian cancer with a primary care professional and discussed the pros and cons of the screening test with a trained genetic counselor," Task Force chair Virginia Moyer, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement. "We hope that further research into ways to use genomic science, such as identifying women who have harmful *BRCA* genes but do not have a family history of cancer, could improve [screening practices](#) and even prevent some cancers."

More information: [Draft Recommendation Statement](#)
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