Family History
It’s connected to your health

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, 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.

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

Know your history • Get Connected • Change your future!