

Breast Cancer in the Family

New national guidelines, patient perspectives and what the guidelines mean for primary care

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The NICE guideline

- NICE clinical guideline 164 (June 2013): *Familial breast cancer* is a comprehensive guideline on the care/treatment of men and women at higher risk of developing breast cancer due to family history

Guideline development

- Guideline development group composed of all relevant disciplines across primary, secondary, specialist care + 3 patient reps with broad experience of the condition and working within patient organisations
- Comprehensive literature review, health economic analysis, discussion and consensus
- Patient views central to discussion

"My GP knew my mother died of breast cancer at 42 but when I went for advice I was offered nothing. I had no idea there were clinics for people with a family history and I was not advised to look further back in the family to see if there were other cases"
BRCA carrier



"Patient involvement can be tokenistic, but here the respect that the patient experts received from the other experts on the group was unparalleled"
Breakthrough Breast Cancer

"[The guideline is] a game-changer for people with a family history and a historic step for the prevention of breast cancer"
Breakthrough Breast Cancer

Breast cancer family history: the facts

- ~ 3% of the female population has a significant family history
- Can affect men as well
- 1 in 5 cases of breast cancer associated with family history
- 2,500 cases due to known breast cancer genes such as BRCA1/2
- "Moderate risk" 17-30% lifetime risk
- "High risk" ≥30% lifetime risk
- Women with a family history are often highly aware of the disease and have concerns for the health of themselves and their families

"I think [chemoprevention] is a huge step forward, it offers women an alternative to drastic surgery and a way of managing personal risk."
Woman with a family history of breast cancer

The GP: gateway to risk management

- Vital role for GPs in appropriate risk assessment and referral
- But not all GPs currently correctly referring those at risk
- GPs are gateway to further services e.g. enhanced surveillance, risk reduction techniques, gene testing where appropriate
- Detailed referral algorithm included in the NICE guideline***

The GP needs to find out:

- Personal history of cancer
- First- and second-degree family history: nature of cancers in the family and age diagnosed
- Relationship of patient to affected relative (including whether maternal or paternal relative)
- Ethnicity of patient and relatives
- If there is a known cancer predisposing gene change in the family, e.g. BRCA1/2

*pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/familial-breast-cancer

Should you prescribe HRT after risk-reducing surgery?

- Risk-reducing salpingo-oophorectomy may be offered to women at high risk – reduces risk of breast and ovarian cancer
- However, results in early menopause – risk of accelerated osteoporosis, heart disease and menopausal symptoms
- Guideline recommends offering HRT up until the time the natural menopause would have been expected as benefits likely to outweigh the risks

Chemoprevention and the role of primary care

- New guideline recommends that tamoxifen / raloxifene should be offered as risk-reducing options to women at high risk of breast cancer
- This option should also be considered for women at moderate risk

Benefits and risks

- Provides alternative to drastic risk reducing surgery, though less effective (only reduces risk by 30-40%)
- For moderate risk women – only meaningful risk reduction option but risk benefit balance less clear
- Increased risk of endometrial cancer and thromboembolic events. Side effects like hot flushes and nausea can be severe in some patients

Prescribing

- Discussion of risks, benefits, alternatives: likely to take place in specialist or secondary care
- GPs are likely to have a major role in prescribing and monitoring
- Drugs unlicensed for this use (and, as they are generic, are unlikely to be licensed in future) – follow GMC prescribing guidelines and seek buy-in from joint area prescribing committees

Implementation

- Breakthrough Breast Cancer knows that implementing the guideline will not be easy
- Help us help you! What tools / support would help you feel more confident in implementing the guideline?

More information

- The NICE guideline can be found at <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG164>
- Breakthrough Breast Cancer has information on family history and breast cancer at breakthrough.org.uk
- The National Hereditary Breast Cancer Helpline offers information and support for people with a family history of breast cancer 01629 81300 www.breastcancergenetics.co.uk