



# Influencing best practice in breast cancer

While survival for women with breast cancer in Australia is among the highest in the world, there is evidence that not all patients are receiving the most appropriate care or getting the information they need about the options that are right for them. This unwarranted variation has the potential to have an impact on patient outcomes and experience.

## About the Statement

The aim of the *Cancer Australia Statement – Influencing best practice in breast cancer* is to iron out unwarranted variations in breast cancer care in Australia.

The Statement is a summary of 12 practices that have been identified as appropriate or inappropriate for the provision of evidence-based, patient-centred breast cancer care in Australia. It highlights what 'ought to be done' in breast cancer care to maximise clinical benefit, minimise harm and deliver patient-centred care.

Not every practice will be relevant for all people diagnosed with breast cancer. The practice(s) relevant to an individual will depend on the type and stage of their breast cancer, their age, and where they are in their breast cancer journey.



## HOW WAS THE STATEMENT DEVELOPED?

Cancer Australia took a highly collaborative, consultative and evidence-based approach to the development of the Statement. People with cancer were an integral part of the process, which brought key clinical and cancer organisations together with women with breast cancer to identify priority areas of practice.

## USING THE STATEMENT

The Statement aims to empower people with breast cancer to engage with their health professionals and make informed, evidence-based decisions that deliver the best outcomes for them.

You may wish to talk with your health professionals about the practices in the Statement and about the options available to you.

For more information about the Statement visit [canceraustralia.gov.au/statement](http://canceraustralia.gov.au/statement)



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Appropriate to offer genetic counselling to women with a high familial risk at or around the time that they are diagnosed with breast cancer, with a view to genetic testing to inform decision making about treatment.

## WHAT THIS PRACTICE IS ABOUT

Around 5% of all breast cancer diagnoses in Australia are associated with the inheritance of a faulty (mutated) gene. When the risk of breast cancer is associated with the inheritance of a faulty gene, it is called 'familial risk'.

Women are considered to be at potentially high familial risk of breast cancer if they have a number of close relatives on the same side of the family diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer, especially if those relatives were diagnosed at a young age.

Genetic counselling and, if appropriate, genetic testing, aims to assess whether a breast cancer diagnosis is due to a faulty gene mutation.

## WHY THIS PRACTICE MIGHT BE IMPORTANT TO YOU

If you have a strong family history of breast or ovarian cancer, this may be due to the inheritance of a faulty gene.

Having a faulty gene may mean you are at higher risk of developing another breast cancer or ovarian cancer. It may also mean that other members of your family are at increased risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer.

The results of genetic counselling and, if needed, genetic testing, might affect the decisions you make about your breast cancer treatment, including surgical options to reduce your risk of further developing breast or ovarian cancers.

Genetic counselling and, if needed, genetic testing, can inform discussions about treatment options and family implications with your doctor.

## MORE INFORMATION

More information about other recommended practices and the Statement is available at [canceraustralia.gov.au/statement](http://canceraustralia.gov.au/statement)



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