What's Jewish about Breast and Ovarian Cancer?  
5 Things You Should Know

1. About 1 in 40 individuals of Ashkenazi Jewish descent will have a BRCA* mutation, regardless of family history of cancer.

2. Most women who have breast or ovarian cancer do not have a family history. Speak to your doctor about the availability of screening.

3. Your genes are not your destiny. Women who are BRCA carriers have options to significantly reduce their risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer.

4. Males can carry BRCA mutations too, and therefore have an increased risk to develop male breast cancer and prostate cancer.

5. More research needs to be done in the realm of hereditary cancers and Jewish genetics. We still have a lot to learn.

*BRCA: A gene that, when altered or “mutated,” causes an increased risk for breast and ovarian cancers and other cancers as well. BRCA mutation testing is recommended for individuals with a strong personal or family history of breast or ovarian cancer, as known BRCA mutation carriers may take measures to reduce their risk of developing cancer. BRCA carriers have a 50% risk of passing down their mutation to each of their children.

Genetic counseling for BRCA-related cancers is available at many genetics clinics in your area. For more information or to make an appointment with the Program for Jewish Genetic Health of Yeshiva University/Einstein, please email us at: jewishgenetichleath@yu.edu.