Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Oxford Regional Genetic Department

DNA Banking
Saving your DNA for the future

An information leaflet for individuals with a family history of cancer
Why have I been given this leaflet?
You may have been given this leaflet because you have been referred to the Genetics Service with a family history of cancer. Alternatively, one of your relatives may have been seen by the Genetics Service and suggested you would be happy for us to contact you.

What is DNA Banking?
Your body is made up of millions of cells. Your DNA is contained within the cells and contains all your genetic instructions. You inherit your DNA from your parents and you pass it on to your children.

DNA Banking allows you to store some of your genetic material in case genetic testing can be offered in the future. We take a small sample of your blood and send it to our Genetics Laboratory. They remove the DNA from your blood and keep it in safe storage.

What is the purpose of DNA Banking?
DNA Banking provides families with the chance to pursue genetic testing some time in the future.

Genetic testing involves looking at DNA for changes. These changes may mean some members of the family could have an increased risk of developing a hereditary illness or disorder such as cancer.

Who do we offer DNA Banking to?
DNA Banking is usually offered to individuals who have had cancer. This may be because no genetic test can be offered at present. It allows the family to take advantage of future advances in genetic testing.

We also offer DNA Banking if a full clinical assessment is not possible. This might be because a family member is seriously ill or having treatment. Banking ensures a sample of their DNA is available for
future testing which may help the rest of the family. The family can then focus on their relative’s care or treatment. This allows us to defer any decisions about testing until the family is ready.

Some individuals choose to store DNA as they don’t want to have genetic testing at the moment. They may want to consider testing at some point in the future to help their relatives.

Where will my DNA be banked?

Your DNA sample will be stored in the Regional Genetics laboratory of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Who may use my banked DNA?

Only you or other family members will be able to request the sample is tested. It may be used for tests requested by you, or by your relatives in the event of your death. You will have an opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of testing before making any decisions.

What happens now?

If you have been given a consent form and blood pack with this leaflet and wish to bank DNA you need to sign and return the consent form. You will also have been sent a form to have a blood sample taken at your GP or local hospital. If you are currently having treatment or other blood samples taken, you could have this done at the same time. Your hospital or GP can send the sample back to us.

If you are currently having chemotherapy, it would be better to have the sample taken at least four weeks after your treatment has finished. This will give your white blood cells a chance to recover.

If you have received a banking pack and do not wish to bank DNA, please let us know so we can update our records and ensure you are not sent any further requests.

If you have received this leaflet on its own and wish to bank DNA
If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call 01865 221473 or email PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust is not responsible for the third-party information and does not endorse any product, view or process or opinion from such sources.

This leaflet is based, with permission, on a leaflet produced by the West Midlands Regional Genetic Service.

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