

New study announced that will use genetics to test for Alzheimer's risk

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In a new Alzheimer's disease risk assessment study unveiled this week during the Alzheimer's Association International Conference, researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) are offering genetic testing and Alzheimer's risk estimates for people who are experiencing mild cognitive impairment.

The Risk Evaluation and Education for Alzheimer's Disease Study (REVEAL) is a multi-center randomized [controlled trial](#) funded by the National Institutes of Health and led by Robert C. Green, MD, MPH, a physician-scientist in the Division of Genetics at BWH.

"We are on the brink of developing disease modifying treatments and [preventative measures](#) to combat Alzheimer's disease," Green said. "As health professionals begin to put these discoveries into medical practice, they will need to communicate complex risk information to individuals and their families. We expect that the REVEAL study will provide accurate guidance for estimating and communicating risk information to individuals, and we hope that results from REVEAL will inform the future practice of treating individuals at risk for Alzheimer's disease."

The goal of the REVEAL study is to determine how people with mild cognitive impairment and their caregivers respond to health education and [genetic testing](#). Researchers will evaluate how well participants understand the Alzheimer's risk assessment materials and the implications of the genetic test. After the results are returned to the participants, researchers will monitor how participants adjust

psychologically and what [behavioral changes](#) they make in response to the new information.

Mild cognitive impairment is a common condition where those affected have noticeable memory and thinking problems but can still carry out their usual activities. People with mild cognitive impairment are at elevated risk for developing Alzheimer's disease, so it is important to evaluate the different methods of providing risk information for Alzheimer's, including genetic testing, to those individuals and their loved ones. REVEAL participants will have the opportunity to learn what it means to have [mild cognitive impairment](#), what their chances are of developing Alzheimer's and how to cope with problems related to memory loss. Researchers will follow up with participants for a period of six months after the risk assessment is received.

Provided by Brigham and Women's Hospital

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