

New approach helps women talk to their families about cancer risk

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To understand their risk for hereditary forms of cancer, such as breast and colon cancer, women need to know their family history. The design and effectiveness of a 20-minute skills-based intervention that can help women better communicate with relatives and gather and share

information about cancer family history is described in a study in *Journal of Women's Health*.

In the article "[The KinFact Intervention - A Randomized Controlled Trial to Increase Family Communication About Cancer History](#)," Joann Bodurtha, MD, and coauthors from Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD), Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, VA), and Boston University (MA), describe the Keeping Information about Family Cancer Tune-up Program (KinFact) intervention.

KinFact participants were significantly more likely to gather and share family cancer information with relatives and to communicate with them more often than were women who instead received a handout about lowering [cancer risk](#) and cancer screening. The authors found that the effectiveness of KinFact varied depending on whether women were pregnant and on their level of genetic literacy.

"Communication within families about [cancer](#) diagnoses and risk is difficult, and interventions like KinFact are useful to better understand patients' family health risks," says Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health*, Executive Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA, and President of the Academy of Women's Health.

More information: The article is available free on the *Journal of Women's Health* website at <http://online.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089/jwh.2014.4754> until December 10, 2014.

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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