

Review examines the pros and cons of surgery to reduce the risk of cancer

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Genetic testing is commonplace for many inheritable cancer syndromes, and with that comes the knowledge of being a gene carrier for some patients. Many guidelines recommend that gene carriers take certain steps, such as surgery, to reduce their risk of developing cancer. A new *BJS (British Journal of Surgery)* review explores the quality-of-life consequences of genetic testing and risk-reducing surgery.

The review notes that risk-reducing surgery almost uniformly decreases cancer anxiety and affects patients' quality of life, but it is irreversible and can be associated with short- and long-term side-effects.

"For some hereditary cancer syndromes, risk-reduction surgery increases [life expectancy](#), decreases cancer anxiety, and is associated with improvements in quality of life; however, these procedures are irreversible and can be associated with marked early and late complications," said senior author Dr. Todd Tuttle, of the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis.

More information: A. M. Altman et al, Quality-of-life implications of risk-reducing cancer surgery, *British Journal of Surgery* (2018). [DOI: 10.1002/bjs.10725](https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10725)

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