

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

January 17 2018

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](#)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Review examines the pros and cons of surgery to reduce the risk of cancer (2018, January 17) retrieved 20 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-01-pros-cons-surgery-cancer.html>

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