



COULD IT BE GENETIC?

You may have questions about birth defects or other problems in your child, other family members, or yourself.

Anyone can have a birth defect or genetic disorder.

Genetic Evaluation and Genetic Counseling may be most helpful if:

- An individual in your family has:
 - More than one birth defect
 - Developmental delay/mental retardation
 - Physical features that differ from the rest of the family
 - Growth problems
- Someone in your family has a known genetic disorder
- You are concerned that you or your child's problems might be related to alcohol or drugs used during pregnancy
- Certain health problems seem to “run” in your family

Genetic Consultation Services may help answer the following questions:

- Why did this happen?
- What can we expect in the future?
- Is there a test to detect this?
- Will this happen again?
- Can this be detected in future pregnancies?
- Where can we go for help?

The genetic doctor and genetic counselor will respect your feelings and beliefs.

What should you expect at a genetic evaluation?

- Before the visit you will be contacted to get medical and family history information, and to make an appointment for the genetic consultation.
- At the appointment, you or your child will be seen by a genetic counselor and/or a doctor. The doctor may examine you or your child.
- After the exam, the doctor and/or genetic counselor will discuss their findings with you and may suggest testing. They may tell you about other services available in your area and may suggest a follow-up visit.
- A review of what was discussed can be sent to you and your health provider at your request.

This fact sheet was originally developed by the Pacific Northwest Regional Genetics Group, which is no longer active, and was updated by the Western States Genetic Services Collaborative.