



# THE CENTRE FOR GENETICS EDUCATION

MY NAME:

FAMILY NAME:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION

Many common disorders such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer and mental illness can run in families. If you have knowledge of your family health history, it may be possible to predict, prevent or treat health problems that have affected previous generations.

On the following pages you will find an example of a simple family health history, recorded both as a table and as a family tree. This is a record of family illnesses with important details which may help your doctor to diagnose and prevent health problems by recognising patterns of illness that may run in your family.

### Recording your family health history

Record all current and past health problems, noting if possible the year and or age at which a diagnosis was made or a family member died. Start with your own health record and that of your family members including your parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents and your children (if any). It is important to note the health history of your relatives on both your mother's side and your father's side of the family. Then add the details of your partner's family. Where you have had more than one partner, also record their details if possible.

Try to complete 3 and preferably, 4 generations for each side of your family and your partner (or partners) family. To get this information, it may mean that you have to consider contacting family members with whom you are seldom in contact. Of course it may not always be possible to know or find out the health history of every family member for a number of reasons, including adoption, lack of family contact or missing medical information.

When you have completed your family's details on the table at the back of this brochure, record the date and take it to your doctor for advice about any possible inherited condition in your family.

Some common health problems you may wish to explore

asthma	eye disorders	miscarriage
birth defects	heart disease	muscular or skeletal disorders
blood disorders	high blood pressure	neurological disorders
cancer	high cholesterol	osteoporosis
chromosome disorders	infertility	skin disorder
cystic fibrosis	kidney disease	still birth
deafness	liver disease	thalassaemia
diabetes	mental illness	other
epilepsy	mental retardation	

## Sharing your family health information with your doctor

It is important that your doctor is kept up to date on your family health information. As new information becomes available, add it to your chart, record the date you updated the information and share it with your doctor.

Often the patterns that run in families can best be seen if put in the form of a family health tree as drawn in this brochure. You may like to do this for yourself, working from your health table, or simply take the table of information to your doctor.

## Further information

If you have any queries about how to record your details, specific genetic conditions or would like information about your closest genetics service, please call the Centre for Genetics Education on (02) 99267324 or email us at: [genetics@med.usyd.edu.au](mailto:genetics@med.usyd.edu.au)

The Centre's website also contains information sheets about basic genetics and some more common genetic conditions. ([www.genetics.com.au](http://www.genetics.com.au))

## HEALTH DETAILS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE DAWSON FAMILY TREE

Relationship to me	Person's name// Male or Female	Date of Birth (b)/ Date of Death (d)	Past or present health problems, age at and/or year of diagnosis or cause of death
Me	Jason Dawson (m)	b 15.9.1970	Spina bifida (from birth)
My mother	Megan Chang (f)	b 17.7.1939	Diabetes type 1 (age 15, 1955)
My father	Richard Dawson (m)	b 3.10.1935	
My sister	Jodie Dawson (f)	b 5.8.1973	Breast cancer (age 29, 2002)
My child	Amelia Dawson (f)	Miscarried 15 weeks 1999	
My uncle (mother's brother)	Frank Chang (m)	b 10.1.1942	Bowel cancer (age 53, 1995)
My aunt (father's sister)	Patricia Dawson (f)	b 17.11.1937	Breast cancer (age 40, 1977)
My cousin (aunt's son) (father's sister's)	Simon Dawson (m)	b 23.7.1975	Down syndrome
My niece (sister's daughter)	Skye Dawson (f)	b 22.12.1998	
My mother's mother (maternal)	Amy Chang (f)	b 15.6.1920	Blood pressure, arthritis (hip replacement)
My mother's father (maternal)	Roger Chang (m)	b 17.10.1918	Asthma (from when a child)
My father's mother (paternal)	Mary Dawson (f)	b 19.1.1919	Ovarian cancer (age 40, 1959)
My father's father (paternal)	Peter Dawson (m)	b 20.5.1919/ d 18.7.1995	Died from heart failure
My partner	Juliet Romano	(f) b 25.2.1972	
My partner's sister	Alexandra Romano (f)	b 1.9.1975	

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My partner's mother	Elizabeth Romano (nee Watson) (f)	b 4.4.1950	Schizophrenia (age 30, 1980)
My partner's father	Peter Romano (m)	b 11.12.1948	
My partner's aunt (partner's father's sister)	Mary Rivers (nee Romano) (f)	b 5.3.1949	Chronic fatigue syndrome (around 1976)
My partner's cousin (partner's aunt's son)	Sam Rivers (m)	b 21.7.1967	
My partner's mother's mother (partner's maternal grandmother)	Jacqueline Watson (f)	b 18.12.1929	Diabetes Type 2
My partner's mother's father (partner's maternal grandfather)	Alfred Watson (m)	b 8.8.1929	
My partner's father's mother (partner's paternal grandmother)	Isabella Romano (f)	b 28.3.1928	Arthritis
My partner's father's father (partners paternal grandfather)	George Romano (m)	b 5.11.1923/ d 13.5.1990	Died from a stroke

Date drawn	Updated on	Updated on
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## Dawson Family Health Tree



