



PATIENT NAME:

FAMILY NAME:

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY HEALTH TREE A GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL USE

A family health tree is a guide to an individual's or family's genetic makeup. Many common disorders such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer and mental illness may have a genetic basis.

If you are aware of your patient's family health history, it may be possible to predict, prevent or treat health problems that have affected previous generations. On the following pages, there is a sample health tree (pedigree) which has been developed from a list of family members and includes important details which may help in diagnosis and prevention.

A resource to guide your patients in the collection of their family health information in the form of a table, can be obtained from the Centre for Genetics Education (see below). When your patient provides you with details of their family health history, inheritance patterns can best be seen by converting this information into a pedigree.

CONSTRUCTING A PEDIGREE FROM A FAMILY HEALTH TABLE

When drawing a pedigree, start with your patient, then add partner (or partners) and any resulting children, patient's siblings and their children, parents and partner's parents and grandparents on each side. Try to complete 3 and if possible, 4 generations for each side of the family.

Record the date on which the pedigree is drawn and update it as new information becomes available. It may not always be possible to complete the pedigree due to adoption, the lack of reliable information or family disruption. It is important to be aware of these issues in each 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	

Further Information

If you would like further information on recording your patients' family history, 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

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

SMITH FAMILY TREE DETAILS (See pedigree below)


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
your patient	David Smith (m)	b 15.12.65	Deafness (from birth)
patient's partner	Mary Farino (f)	b 4.7.66	Breast cancer (1997)
patient's oldest child	James Smith (m)	b 11.8.99	Deafness (from birth)
patient's second child	Unborn baby Smith (u)		
patient's eldest sister	Joan Brown	(f) b 15.10.67	Deafness (from birth)
patient's eldest brother	Bill Smith (m)	b 9.2.69	
patient's second sister	Sue Smith (twin of Bill) (f)	b 9.2.69	
patient's miscarried sibling	Miscarriage (u)	d 6 weeks	Miscarriage at 6 weeks
patient's half brother	John Peters (m)	b 1.9.81	
patient's first cousin	Julie Williams (f)	b 12.10.67	Schizophrenia
partner's brother	Frank Farino (m)	b 2.5.68	
partner's sister	Lara Jones (nee Farino) (f)	b 1.11.69	β Thalassaemia minor
partner's brother-in-law	Jack Jones (m)	b 5.4.66	β Thalassaemia minor
patient's father	Ralph Smith (m)	b 4.4.40	Bowel cancer (October 1975)
patient's mother (divorced)	Rosa Smith (nee Buck) (f)	b 8.6.42	Deafness (1972) Osteoporosis (2000)
patient's step father	Joseph Peters (m)	b 8.10.45	
patient's maternal aunt	Dianne Williams (nee Buck) (f)	b 15.7.46	
partner's father	Andrew Farino (m)	b 8.7.42	
partner's mother	Sophie Farino (nee Jones) (f)	b 9.10.43	
partner's adopted paternal uncle	John Farino (m)	b 5.2.45	Bowel cancer (1975)
partner's maternal	Harry Jones (m)	b 2.1.45	

patient's paternal grandfather	Robert Smith (m)	b 4.5.17 d 12.12.82	
patient's paternal grandmother	Jane Smith (f)	b 1.5.20 d 23.3.99	
patient's maternal grandfather	George Buck (m)	b 17.7.15 d 29.9.2000	Deafness (1975) Stroke (2000)
patient's maternal grandmother	Violet Buck (f)	b 21.1.19 d 6.6.95	
partner's paternal grandfather	Henry Farino (m)	b 25.8.17 d 19.10.84	Lung cancer (1982)
partner's maternal grandfather	Ann Farino (f)	b 29.9.19 d 30.11.98	Breast cancer (1952)
partner's paternal grandmother	Alfred Jones (m)	b 31.1.11 d 12.5.85	
partner's maternal grandmother	Mary Jones (f)	b 7.6.27 d 11.9.02	

Date drawn	Updated on	Updated on
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In a family health tree,

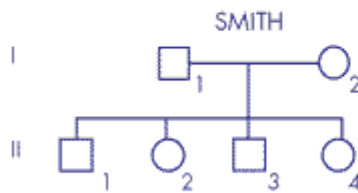
Each generation is on a separate line:

Males  Females 

Marriage/Relationship 

Partners who are related e.g. cousins 

The generations are numbered in Roman numerals and family members are given a number from left to right across the generation.





Miscarriages should be noted 

Adoption:
a) A child who is adopted "into" the family 



b) A child who is adopted "out" of the family 

Ongoing pregnancy 

Death is recorded as a stroke through the square or circle with the age at death recorded and what the cause was  

Stillbirths  

Termination of a pregnancy 

Any family member who has or has had a disorder is identified by shading. Write the condition under the symbol   Bowel cancer

Heterozygote (Genetic carrier) 

Your patient 

THE SMITH FAMILY PEDIGREE

