

## PRESS RELEASE

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#### **Major Medical Journal Confirms Genetic Testing Can Lead to Improved Care for Men, Outlining Lifetime Cancer Risks and Management with Inherited BRCA1 and BRCA2 Cancer Risk Genes**

*The peer-reviewed article appeared in JAMA Oncology, which was published by the American Medical Association, and was co-authored by 19 BRCA experts from 13 leading academic medical institutions and international cancer centers.*

#### **CHICAGO (July 25, 2024) —**

On July 25, 2024, JAMA Oncology, a medical journal published by the American Medical Association, released a groundbreaking article titled “*BRCA1, BRCA2 and Associated Cancer Risks and Management for Males.*” The peer-reviewed paper compiles and considers existing evidence and approved guidelines for men into one place and includes currently available cancer risk statistics for men with BRCA1 and BRCA2 damaging variants (mutations) at various ages. The article emphasizes that individuals who carry inherited BRCA1 and BRCA2 variants associated with cancer risk, may have important options to be proactive about their risk by being aware of updated guidelines on cancer screening. For those who already have cancer, this new information about their genetic mutation can signal clinicians to prescribe different drugs and therapies that are designed to be especially effective against BRCA-related cancers.

The lead author of the article is Heather H. Cheng, MD, PhD, a widely recognized and respected oncologist from the University of Washington and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, along with an esteemed group of international experts in the field. The concept for the paper arose from discussions about unmet needs for BRCA patients at the BRCA Research & Cure Alliance’s strategic “CureBRCA Collaborative,” a meeting that includes BRCA experts comprised of well-known oncologists, urologists, geneticists, and genetic counselors from across the globe.

#### **About BRCA**

*BRCA1* and *BRCA2* are genes that code for proteins important in repairing damaged DNA. People have two copies of each of these genes, with one copy inherited from each parent. If someone inherits a damaged variant of the gene (also known as a mutation), there is an increased risk of developing certain cancers. If there is a familial damaged BRCA1 or BRCA2 variants, they can be inherited from either parent and may be passed on to children. Each child has a 50% chance of inheriting a parent’s variant. Importantly, not everyone who inherits a damaged BRCA1 or BRCA2 variant gets cancer—ongoing research is aimed at improving cancer screening with tailored approaches and new technologies and understanding the potential protective environmental and genetic factors.

#### **BRCA Awareness for Men vs Women**

Historically, there has been much less awareness and communication about the elevated risk to males with BRCA for cancers such as prostate, pancreas, and breast. While there are potentially life-saving health interventions that can be offered to women, there is much less awareness and encouragement of genetic testing and availability of educational resources for men seeking information and guidance regarding their cancer risks, prevention, and treatment options.

#### **About the BRCA Research & Cure Alliance (CureBRCA)**

The BRCA Research & Cure Alliance (CureBRCA) is a registered Illinois not-for-profit private foundation founded by philanthropists Michael and Tanya Polsky. CureBRCA’s mission is to advance the knowledge, prevention, and treatment of individuals and families affected by *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* gene mutations. Nationally, there are only a few foundations with a concentrated focus on BRCA. “We hope that by creating CureBRCA, we can educate, support research, and bring together the world’s best experts to help find better ways to diagnose, prevent, and treat cancers caused by BRCA mutations,” said its Founder, Michael Polsky.

CureBRCA’s organizational structure is unique from many other nonprofit foundations because it is not formally partnered with any outside entity or institution. The Founders believe this approach of gathering collective wisdom from a diverse set

of knowledgeable stakeholders has the potential to break down scientific barriers and information silos to better promote knowledge-sharing across disciplines and provide input and guide strategy to address the unattended questions inherent in BRCA-related cancers. CureBRCA brings together experts to work towards increasing awareness and genetic testing for men by funding collaborative research to help propel knowledge and progress.

For additional information, visit [www.curebrca.org](http://www.curebrca.org).

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