

## Pancreatic Cancer Screening

### What is Pancreatic Cancer?

Cancer is a disease where the body's cells begin to divide without stopping and can spread to other organs. Pancreatic cancer is when this cell growth occurs in our pancreas. The pancreas is an organ in the abdomen that makes hormones like insulin.

### Risk Factors for Pancreatic Cancer

There are certain things that we know put us at an increased risk for pancreatic cancer, such as:

- Older age
- Cigarette smoking
- Chronic inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis)
- Family history of pancreatic cancer
- Diabetes
- Inherited genetic mutations

### Screening

For individuals at a high risk of pancreatic cancer due to a combination of genetic mutations and family history, there are screening options available. Screening involves two types of imaging tools.

#### ***Magnetic Resonance Cholangiopancreatography (MRCP)***

MRCP is a non-invasive way to help see the bile and pancreatic ducts. This imaging tool may help detect larger cancerous lesions.

#### ***Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS)***

EUS is an invasive procedure that inserts a camera down the throat to create a picture of the pancreas. This is usually an outpatient procedure done at a same-day surgery center. It is the most sensitive screening test available for pancreatic cancer.

Importantly, pancreatic cancer screening is currently only recommended after having a discussion with a doctor about the benefits and limitations of this screening process. It is only recommended to undergo pancreatic cancer screening at hospitals that are actively participating in research involving the early detection of pancreatic cancer.

### Preventing Pancreatic Cancer

In addition to screening, there are other things we can do to reduce our risk for pancreatic cancer. These include making healthy lifestyle changes by:

- Quitting smoking
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Eating a healthy diet (fruits and vegetables)
- Maintaining good control of other health conditions such as diabetes

If you have a family history of pancreatic cancer in a close relative, genetic testing may be helpful in deciding if screening for pancreatic cancer is right for you.

**Do you have a personal or family history of cancer? Genetic testing and counseling may be right for you. We can help find the cancer screening plan you need. Call Huntsman Cancer Institute's Family Cancer Assessment Clinic to learn more: 801-587-9555.**