



Dear Family Member,

A member of your family has been identified as having a genetic mutation in the **ATM gene**. Mutations in this gene are known to be associated with an increased risk for certain cancers. This means that other family members are at risk to carry this same gene mutation and hence at an increased risk for certain cancers. This letter has been written to summarize information regarding ATM mutations.

**Mutations in this gene are known to result in a moderately increased risk for breast cancer.** Female ATM mutation carriers have approximately a 2-4-fold increased risk for developing breast cancer, which correlates to an approximate 24-48% lifetime risk for breast cancer. A slightly increased risk for pancreatic cancer has also been reported. An increased risk for additional cancers has been reported by some studies, but these risks are not well defined. Additional research will likely be performed in the future to clarify these risks.

Understanding risk is an important tool in prevention and management of cancer. It is important to note that many individuals with ATM mutations will never develop cancer over their lifetime. When one inherits an ATM mutation, he/she is not inheriting cancer; rather they are inheriting a predisposition to cancer.

When an individual has one copy of the ATM gene mutation they have an increased risk for breast and possibly other cancers as outlined above. Because everyone has two copies of the gene for ATM, this means that a parent who carries an ATM mutation has a 50% chance of passing the mutation onto each of their children. It also means that if a person carries such a mutation, their siblings have a 50% chance to carry the same mutation. Extended family members may also be at risk for having the same mutation. If a person does not carry the mutation, they cannot pass it onto their children. It should be noted that very rarely an individual may have two ATM mutations, one inherited from their mother, and one inherited from their father. If a person has two ATM mutations they have a condition known as ataxia telangiectasia. Ataxia telangiectasia is a rare inherited disorder that affects the nervous system, immune system, and other body systems.

**We strongly recommend that you and all persons in your family who are at risk for carrying the ATM gene mutation consider scheduling an appointment for cancer genetic counseling to discuss the benefits and limitations of genetic testing.** To pursue cancer genetic testing, it is helpful if you have a copy of your family member's genetic testing report indicating that they have an ATM mutation.

GeneScreen is available to discuss this information in more detail with you and coordinate appropriate testing. Please visit the following website to submit your request for genetic counseling: <https://hipaa.jotform.com/200926739003048>. You can also contact Genescreen directly at 908-766-2800 to schedule a remote consultation with a genetic counselor.

Sincerely,



***Genetic Counseling Service***

75 Claremont Rd Suite 305

Bernardsville, NJ 07924

**Stephanie Nunziato-Virga, MS, LGC**

Senior Oncology Genetic Counselor  
Genescreen

**Jill Chisholm, APN**

President  
Genescreen