# Genetic Testing and Results:

## A 6-step Guide for Healthcare Professionals

Latin-SEQ+

This poster guides healthcare professionals through a 6-step process to support informed consent for genetic testing. Use it with the patient toolkit to explain what testing involves, its possible outcomes and implications.

### 1. Explain the test to your patient

- Why are you offering the test?
- What sample is required?
- Where will you send the sample?
- When do you expect the results?

**Informed consent is an ongoing conversation, not a single event.**

### 2. Speak of potential benefits

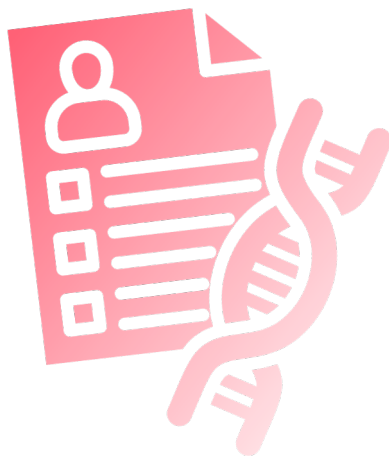
**For your patient will the test:**

- Identify or confirm a genetic cause.
- Inform treatment, monitoring and future care.
- Provide prognostic information.
- Support reproductive decisions.
- Identify risks for relatives.
- Help explain the condition?

### 3. Be clear about its limitations

**Explain that:**

- A cause may not be found.
- A negative result may not exclude a genetic cause.
- Results may not change care.
- Unexpected findings may arise which can cause worry and uncertainty.
- Some results may remain uncertain.



### 4. Mention potential emotional and family implications

**Testing and results may:**

- Cause anxiety, uncertainty, guilt, shame or worry.
- Generate tensions within the family
- Raise questions about how and whether to share results.
- Reveal information relevant to relatives
- Lead to differing family views.

### 5. Explain possible results

**Pathogenic or likely pathogenic variant:**
A genetic change explains or contributes to the condition.

**No significant variant found:**
No genetic explanation identified, although a genetic cause may still exist.

**Variant of Uncertain Significance (VUS)*:**
this means that a genetic change was found but there is not enough evidence to know whether it is related to disease.

***Clinicians and patients should understand that:**

- A VUS does not confirm a diagnosis.
- A VUS does not rule out a diagnosis.
- Interpretation of a VUS may change over time as scientific knowledge develops.

### 6. Discuss wider implications

- Whether and how results can affect relatives.
- Reproductive options and family planning.
- Possible implications for insurance, employment or travel.
- Future re-analysis or reinterpretation (particularly if there is a VUS).

### Before consent, confirm your patient understands:

- Why testing is offered.
- Its benefits and limitations.
- The possibility of uncertain or unexpected results.
- The potential impact of results on relatives.
- How and when results will be communicated.
- Their right to ask questions or decline testing.

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