

Genetic counseling

When a child is born with a birth defect or several related medical problems, parents often want to understand why. They also want to know what their child's diagnosis may mean for future children.

At Children's, all new patients seen by Children's genetics team meet with a genetic counselor to discuss these issues. Genetic counselors and families typically discuss:

- Your child's diagnosis
- What is known about the cause or causes of the diagnosis
- Whether or not the condition is inherited
- Whether there are risks to family members for recurrence

Families typically are referred for genetic counseling by a provider. Common reasons for a referral include a family history of a birth defect or a genetic condition such as spina bifida, Down syndrome, or sickle cell anemia.