What can I do?

If a couple has a known family history of an autosomal recessive condition it is recommended that they contact their GP or midwife who can refer them to their local genetics centre where they can discuss their situation and tests that are available.

If you have any questions or require more information you can contact:

Manchester Centre for Genomic Medicine

Genetic Medicine
6th Floor
Saint Mary's Hospital
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9WL

Tel: (0161) 276 6506
8.30 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday
Fax: (0161) 276 6145

No Smoking Policy

The NHS has a responsibility for the nation's health.

Protect yourself, patients, visitors and staff by adhering to our no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted within any of our hospital buildings or grounds.

The Manchester Stop Smoking Service can be contacted on
Tel: (0161) 205 5998 (www.stopsmokingmanchester.co.uk).

Translation and Interpretation Service

It is our policy that family, relatives or friends cannot interpret for patients. Should you require an interpreter ask a member of staff to arrange it for you.

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ইহা আমাদের নীতি যে, একজন রোগীর জন্য তার পরিবারের সদস্য, আত্মীয় বা কোন বন্ধু অনুবাদক হতে পারবেন না। আপনার একজন অনুবাদকের প্রয়োজন হলে তা একজন কর্মচারীকে আপনার অনুবাদকের ব্যবস্থা করার জন্য।

Nasze zasady nie pozwalają na korzystanie z pomocy członków rodzin pacjentów, ich przyjaciół lub ich krewnych jako tłumaczy. Jeśli potrzebują Państwo tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt z członkiem personelu, który zorganizuje go dla Państwa.

Waa nidaamkeena in qoys, qaraaboamasaaxiiboaysanu tarjumikarinbukaanka. Haddiiaad u baahatotarjumaankacodsoxubinka mid ah shaqaalahainaykuusameeyaan.

我们的方针是，家属，亲戚和朋友不能为病人做口译。如果您需要口译员，请叫员工给您安排。

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Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Saint Mary's Hospital

Manchester Centre for Genomic Medicine

What does it mean if we marry within the family?

Information for patients

This leaflet has been designed to explain why in the genetic clinic it is sometimes important to know if couples have married within the family.

If you have any questions or if you would like to discuss anything in more detail, please feel free to ask your genetics doctor or counsellor.

What is Consanguinity?

Consanguinity describes when a couple were related before they were married.

This means that they will share a common ancestor like a grandparent or great grandparent.

What are genes?

Genes are the 'instructions' telling our bodies how they should be made.

Genes are inherited from our parents. Genes come in pairs and we inherit one copy from our mother and one from our father.

Sometimes a change can occur in a gene which means it cannot work correctly, causing health problems.

What are autosomal recessive disorders?

Our genes come in pairs so it often doesn't matter if we have one changed copy. The other copy is normal and this works in its place. A person with one changed copy of a gene is called a healthy carrier.

If a person inherits two changed copies of a gene, they have no working copy. As one copy of each gene comes from our mother and one from our father, both parents need to be carriers of the same changed gene to be at risk of having an affected child.

When someone has heath problems because two copies of a gene are not working this is called having an autosomal recessive disorder.

Why ask if we are related?

Everyone carries several changed genes. A couple who were related before they were married are more likely to have the same changed genes. This is because they have both inherited some of their genes from their shared relatives.

In the case of first cousins, both of them could have inherited the same changed gene from one of the grandparents they share.

There is more than one type of genetic disorder. Consanguinity only increases the risk of autosomal recessive disorders.

This means that some medical problems are more common in the children of cousin parents.

What is the risk of having a child with problems?

If parents are not related they have a risk of about 2 in 100 (2%) of having a child with health problems or a disability.

If parents are first cousins that risk is doubled to about 4 in 100 (4%).

The more distantly the parents are related the lower the risk of having a child with an autosomal recessive disorder.

When there is no family history of a recessive disorder most children will be healthy. However if there is a tradition of cousin marriages going back generations then the couple will have a higher risk of having a child with health problems.

If there is a child in the family who has a recessive disorder, there is an increased risk that other couples in the family may have an affected child as well.