WHAT is GENETIC TESTING?
Genetic testing is a type of medical test that doctors use to look for changes called variants in a person’s genes or DNA that can cause diseases.

WHAT are GENES and DNA?
Genes are part of our DNA and they provide instructions that tell the body how to function. You can think of each person’s DNA as their body’s cookbook, and genes are the recipes.

WHY is GENETIC TESTING IMPORTANT?
- Genetic testing can look for variants that cause your disease
- Doctors can use this information to predict what symptoms may develop and add other doctors to your medical care team
- Some research studies are only open to patients with specific gene variants
- Knowing your gene variants can be helpful for family planning

WHAT DOES the GENETIC TESTING PROCESS LOOK LIKE and WHY is GENETIC COUNSELING IMPORTANT?
Your doctor can refer you to a genetic counselor to discuss genetic testing. If you want genetic testing, a DNA sample can be collected from a blood draw or cheek swab. The genetic counselor will meet with you when results are received to explain what they mean for your medical care.

IS GENETIC TESTING the SAME THING as NEWBORN SCREENING?
Newborn screening is different from genetic testing. It’s a public health program that screens newborns for certain rare diseases that can affect a child’s long-term health or survival. These infants can receive treatment to prevent serious health problems.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT GENETIC TESTING?
For more information about genetic testing, talk with your doctor or find a genetic counselor near you on the National Society of Genetic Counselors website. https://findagene.nsgc.org/