



He aha te mate Lynch? What is Lynch syndrome?

A guide for communities in Aotearoa.

At a glance...

- Lynch syndrome, also known as Hereditary Nonpolyposis Colorectal Cancer (HNPCC), is a genetic condition that runs in families and is the most common familial bowel cancer syndrome.
- People with this condition are at a higher risk for developing certain types of cancer, particularly of the bowel but also endometrial and ovarian cancers.
- Around 50% of people with Lynch syndrome will develop bowel cancer before the age of 70 years.
- Children have a 50% probability of inheriting Lynch syndrome from a parent.

Further testing discovered Dad had Lynch syndrome, making him more prone to certain cancers, bowel being one of them. Lynch syndrome is hereditary and Dad's brother also has bowel cancer and his father died of the same.

CODY, WHOSE FAMILY HAS LYNCH SYNDROME

What causes Lynch syndrome?

DNA is the blueprint for normal cell function. Lynch syndrome is due to a mistake with the "spellchecking" of DNA, which results in errors. Normally, when cells grow and divide, minor mistakes occur, and the repair genes can recognise and fix them. People with Lynch syndrome lack the ability to repair mistakes, and as they accumulate, this can lead to cancer developing.

Lynch syndrome and bowel cancer

While 6% of the general population in New Zealand will develop bowel cancer by the age of 75, around 50% of

people with Lynch syndrome will develop it before 70. The average age for a bowel cancer diagnosis is 45 for those with this syndrome, compared with 67 years in the general population.

Monitoring the risk among family members

For those with a family history of Lynch syndrome, annual screening with a colonoscopy is recommended from the age of 25, or at least five years earlier than the age at which their youngest relative was diagnosed. Also, there is some evidence that aspirin, if taken regularly, may reduce the chance of bowel cancer.



Want to know more?

You'll find more information here on our website:
bowelcancernz.org.nz > What is Bowel Cancer > Lynch syndrome



Helpful tip

If you have a history of cancer in your family, talk to your GP and ask if you should be tested for Lynch syndrome.



NEED SUPPORT?

Contact our bowel cancer support nurse:
Email: here4you@bowelcancernz.org.nz
Phone: 0800 BCNZ NURSE (226 968)

Join our private Facebook group:
bowelcancernz.org.nz > Support > Finding Support

CONTACT US

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