

# Genetic Counseling at Kennedy Krieger Institute

## Who We Are

For patients and families affected by genetic conditions, a diagnosis often raises even more questions. That's why, to complement the diagnostic, medical and therapeutic care already offered at Kennedy Krieger Institute, we also provide genetic counseling for individuals hoping to better understand what genetic disorders are, how they occur, and what their impact is on families.

Working as part of the healthcare team, our genetic counselors strive to provide individuals with known or suspected genetic disorders with the answers and guidance they need. Our genetic counselors also act as a resource for other healthcare professionals—here at Kennedy Krieger and throughout the community—who have questions about genetic conditions.

## Who We Serve

Genetic counseling services are available in all of our clinics. Individuals who may benefit from a genetic counseling appointment include those who are affected by or have a family history of:

- Down syndrome or other chromosome disorders
- Genetic conditions such as muscular dystrophy, fragile X syndrome, osteogenesis imperfecta or Rett syndrome
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Mitochondrial diseases
- Microcephaly and other brain development disorders

We also see patients who lack a specific diagnosis, but whose symptoms might be related to a genetic or inherited condition. This includes children with unexplained developmental delays or multi-system disorders.



## Our Team

Kennedy Krieger employs several genetic counselors who work with various interdisciplinary centers, clinics and programs throughout the Institute. They are genetics professionals with training not only in medical genetics, but also in psychology, counseling, public health and research.

*“Our genetic counselor was friendly and warm, yet thoroughly professional. She answered all of our questions and guided us through the process of genetic testing.”*

– parent of a child with a chromosome disorder

We are all born with great potential.  
Shouldn't we all have the chance to achieve it?



Kennedy Krieger Institute  
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

## What We Can Offer

Our counselors provide a wide variety of services for families who need guidance from genetics professionals. Genetic counselors can meet with you during your child's physician appointment or as a separate consultation. This flexibility allows patients to receive comprehensive care in one location without the stress of traveling between multiple sites.

A typical genetic counseling session might include:

- Reviewing medical and family health histories
- Helping families understand genetic conditions and how they are inherited
- Explaining current knowledge of how genetic factors contribute to neurodevelopmental disorders, such as ASD and other conditions
- Addressing questions about the chance of recurrence in future children, or risks to other family members
- Guiding families through decision-making about genetic testing
- Coordinating all aspects of genetic testing
- Exploring the impact of genetic disorders on the individual and family
- Assisting individuals and families as they adjust to a diagnosis
- Sharing information about community resources and support groups
- Providing referral information to other appropriate medical clinics and programs

## Referral

While many of our patients are referred by physicians, we also welcome self-referrals. Most insurance companies cover genetic counseling, and our Patient Access Office works with families to facilitate preauthorization.

Kennedy Krieger patients interested in meeting with a genetic counselor should contact their physician about making a referral for this service.

## Genetic Counseling Resources

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Genomics & Precision Health Website**

[cdc.gov/genomics/about/basics.htm](https://cdc.gov/genomics/about/basics.htm)

**Genetic Alliance**

[geneticalliance.org](https://geneticalliance.org)

**National Society of Genetic Counselors**

[nsgc.org](https://nsgc.org)

### Contact Information

#### Genetic Counseling at Kennedy Krieger Institute

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call **443-923-9400**, or call toll-free at **888-554-2080**. TTY users, please contact us at **443-923-2645**, or dial **711** to make a Maryland Relay call.

**KennedyKrieger.org**

**GeneticCounseling@KennedyKrieger.org**

#### Physicians and Healthcare Professionals

To make a referral, call our Physician Referral Line at **443-923-9403**.

#### Clinic Locations

801 North Broadway  
Baltimore, Maryland 21205

3901 Greenspring Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

#### Mailing Address

707 North Broadway  
Baltimore, MD 21205

Kennedy Krieger Institute recognizes and respects the rights of patients and their families and treats them with courtesy and dignity. Kennedy Krieger Institute provides care that preserves cultural, psychosocial, spiritual and personal values, beliefs and preferences. Care is free from discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression, including transgender. We encourage patients and families to become active partners in their care by asking questions, seeking resources and advocating for the services and support they need. © 2020 Kennedy Krieger Institute 04/2020



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