

# What to Expect at Your Child's Genetics Appointment

## Why was my child referred to Genetics?

There are many reasons why a child may be referred to Genetics. Here are some common reasons:

- Your child's doctor noticed physical or developmental features that may have a genetic cause.
- Your child has a medical or health condition that may have a genetic cause.
- There is a family history of a genetic condition.
- Results from a medical test suggest a genetic condition.

## What happens before my child's Genetics appointment?

Usually, you don't need to do anything before your child's appointment. You will be contacted by the Genetics department if any medical information or a medical test is needed before your child is seen. You are also welcome to contact the genetic counselor if you would like to discuss the referral or have any questions before the appointment.

## How do I prepare for my child's Genetics appointment?

There are a few things you can do to prepare for this visit:

- Write down your questions before the visit.
- Gather information about the family history from both sides of the family.
- Review your child's developmental milestones (first sat, first walked, etc.)
- If the visit is at the clinic, pack toys or snacks, especially for small children.
- It is helpful if both parents are present, but is not required.
- If requested, bring non-Kaiser medical records, school evaluations, and photos of close family members.

## Who will we meet at the Genetics appointment?

At your child's appointment you will most likely meet with a medical geneticist and a genetic counselor. Medical geneticists and genetic counselors often work together as a team.

- A medical geneticist is a doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating conditions with a genetic cause.
- A genetic counselor is a medical professional who provides information, counseling, and support to individuals and families with genetic conditions.



## What can I expect at a Genetics appointment?

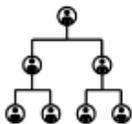
Your child's Genetics appointment may be in-person, by phone, or by video visit. The visit may be different from a typical pediatric visit in a number of ways.



**Genetic appointments can sometimes take an hour or longer.** Most of the time is spent talking with the geneticist and/or the genetic counselor. The discussion may include information about specific genetic conditions and supportive counseling, when needed.



**A detailed medical history will be taken.** Your child's medical records are carefully reviewed and the doctor may verify important details with you. You may be asked about the pregnancy and delivery history, your child's early development, and any learning or behavior issues.



**The family history will be reviewed.** The genetic counselor will draw a family tree (called a "pedigree") showing relatives on both sides of the family. You will be asked about any genetic conditions or medical problems in each person. You may also be asked about birth defects and intellectual disability. Your child's ancestry and ethnic background will be recorded. If your child is adopted or you are not in contact with some relatives, you will be asked to share whatever information is available to you.



**A physical exam may be done.** Not all genetic visits require a physical exam. However, some visits include a physical exam to look for clues that could help in making a diagnosis. This may mean measuring many different parts of the body and taking notes on physical findings. Occasionally other family members, such as siblings or parents, are briefly examined as part of the appointment.



**Tests and additional referrals are sometimes recommended.** The geneticist may recommend tests or evaluations to help make a diagnosis. This could include things like blood tests, urine tests, x-rays, and eye exams. These tests are done after the Genetics visit. There are no blood samples taken during the visit.



**Photographs may be taken.** Sometimes the doctor will ask to take a photo of your child for the medical record. These photos are used to help with the exam and to look at changes as your child gets older. Family photos may also be requested. You may decline having photos taken.

## What can I expect after my child's appointment?

The geneticist will write a report following the visit. This report is in the electronic medical record and can be viewed on [kp.org](http://kp.org). If a test or evaluation was ordered, you will be told when to expect results and how the results will be provided to you. The geneticist or genetic counselor will let you know if another Genetics appointment is needed.

Please contact us by phone or secure email if you have questions or concerns after your visit. It is important to know that not every condition can be identified or diagnosed at the first genetics visit. New genetic information or new tests could be available in the future, so it may help to stay in touch with your child's genetic provider.

You can find more information on the Northern California Genetics Website : [Genetics.kp.org](http://Genetics.kp.org)

Contact your local Genetics Department at:

Fresno: (559) 324-5330

Oakland: (510) 752-6298

Sacramento: (916) 614-4075

San Francisco: (415) 833-2998

San Jose: (408) 972-3300

