

Mayo Clinic Minute: Knowing your family health history could save your life

Does cancer, kidney disease or high blood pressure run in your family? The holidays are the perfect time to share [family health information](#) with your loved ones.

The Office of the Surgeon General declared Thanksgiving as National Family History Day to encourage families to share information about family medical issues that may be inherited or passed down through genetics.

[Dr. Tina Ardon](#), a Mayo Clinic family medicine physician, says reviewing family history can significantly affect overall health.

Video	Audio
	As you gather around the Thanksgiving table, catching up on the latest family news, why not add one more topic to the mix—your family health history?
TINA ARDON, M.D. FAMILY MEDICINE Mayo Clinic	"Understanding your risk factors when it comes to illnesses or conditions or cancers that run in the family is really important."
	Dr. Tina Ardon says knowing your family's medical history is a powerful tool in preventing and managing diseases.
	"Understanding cancers that are prevalent in the family, heart disease, diabetes — these all give us opportunities to look for these things earlier."
	Close relatives, like your parents, siblings and grandparents, influence your health the most.
	"We do want to understand those patients that have family members who are diagnosed at an early age because that may clue us in on a genetic disorder."
	Consider creating a family medical tree and providing that information to your healthcare team during your annual visit.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Sonya Goins.