

# Community-Centered Family Health History: A Customized Approach to Increased Health Communication and Awareness

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## What Is the Purpose of This Study?

To determine whether the *Does It Run In the Family?* toolkit encourages discussion and collection of family health history information.

## What Is the Problem?

- The majority of people in the United States believe that knowing their family health history is important for their health, but only one third have ever collected it.
- There has been little study of whether family health history tools used by individuals, families, and communities inspire measurable changes in communication and in behavior.

## What Are the Findings?

- From pre- to post-*Does It Run In the Family?* toolkit use, family members showed increases in:
  - Communicating about family history of disease risk, and
  - Awareness about family history.
- Fewer people reported having no knowledge of family history after the intervention and more individuals reported that family history was important to their health.
- Participants reported that the toolkit was useful, and that the booklets in the toolkit applied to the family, were relevant to the family, and helped the family.

## Who Should Care Most?

- Community-based organizations interested in health promotion
- Health care providers

## Recommendations for Action

- Engage community members and incorporate their input when adapting tools used to gather family health history for particular communities.
- Promote family health history collection and discussion outside the primary care setting by integrating family health history into ongoing programs and initiatives.
- Incorporate family health history as a unifying theme in public health messaging.
- Combine family health history with other health interventions for a comprehensive, accessible approach.