

## Location:

### Inova Children's Specialty Clinic

8280 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive  
Suite 300  
Fairfax, VA, 22031

### To schedule an appointment\*:

Phone: (571) 472-4300  
Fax: (571) 665-6771  
Email: [inovagenetics@inova.org](mailto:inovagenetics@inova.org)  
<https://www.inova.org/our-services/genetics>

**Referral and a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder needed prior to the Genetic Counseling Visit\***

## What is Genetic Counseling?

Genetic counselors help translate complicated genetic and scientific information while providing you with help and support. They can explain genetic testing, help parents with decision making, as well as support emotional responses to recent diagnoses or information. They can also discuss the chances of having another child with autism spectrum disorder, provide resources and information on management or support groups.

## What is Genetics Testing?

The purpose of genetic testing is to search for variations in the DNA or chromosomes that may be associated with your child's diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. **Genetic testing does not diagnose autism spectrum disorder in a child.** There are many different types of genetic tests and genetic testing is always optional.

# Autism Spectrum Disorder Genetics Clinic



# What to Expect at Your Genetic Counseling Visit?

## 1. Setting Goals

A genetic counseling visit begins with a discussion about what you hope to learn or accomplish during your time with the genetic counselor. Think about questions and concerns ahead of time.

## 2. Medical and Family History

The genetic counselor will gather information about any diagnoses or medical concerns in your child and/or other family members. Before the session, you can fill out the genetics questionnaire in MyChart, request your child's doctors to fax over any recent records, and check in with family members and try to gather some information on diagnoses, pregnancy losses, and health concerns. We use information to see if there are any clues for particular genetic conditions that may run in your family.

## 3. Education and Information-Giving

The genetic counselor will review and answer any questions or concerns you have related to your child's diagnosis and/or genetic testing. They will walk you through the different types of genetic testing, the possible results, and the logistics (e.g. insurance coverage, timing of results, sample collection and follow-up). If they cannot answer your questions, they will provide you with resources or connect you with the appropriate professional.

## 4. Decision-Making

The genetic counselor will answer questions, help you explore your concerns, thoughts, feelings about genetic testing, and give you information so you can make a fully informed decision about whether or not to pursue genetic testing. Genetic testing is always optional!

## 5. Support and Counseling

The genetic counselor can offer support and counseling, and help families cope with emotional responses to a diagnosis, genetic testing, or any information given in the session.

## What are Some Benefits and Limitations of Genetic Testing?

### Benefits

Potential information on prognosis and additional health concerns  
Possible information on inheritance, recurrence risk and for family planning  
Connect your family with support groups

### Limitations

Possible unclear results leading to anxiety and uncertainty  
Potential results with no changes in management  
Possible unexpected or surprise results  
Concerns about genetic discrimination and GINA (<http://ginahelp.org/>)

