Management of Hereditary Breast Cancer

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Breast cancer will affect 1 in 8 American women during their lifetimes, and 5%-10% of these cancers are hereditary. Hereditary breast cancers are associated with genetic mutations that are passed from one generation to the next within families. Women and men who carry these mutations have a significantly increased risk for developing breast and other cancers during their lifetime.

Management of these patients is often complex and requires careful planning. Screening, prophylactic surgery and chemoprevention are the commonest management modalities employed in this patient population. Each management option has its associated risks and benefits and, as such, treatment needs to be tailored to the individual patient's situation.

This discussion aims to review the current management options for these patients.