

## **Family Health Reflection**

From going through my family's health system and analyzing the conditions that have taken place in three generations of my family I was able to create and visualize a family pedigree with a health history. Visualizing my family's health genogram really put into perspective some of the conditions that I have and how they might be related to genetics. Lifestyle choices by certain relatives were also highlighted through this assignment. This assignment was helpful in allowing me to see risk factors, see how my immediate family health conditions might have formed, as well as how lifestyle can affect health even in a family sense.

My family has always had many different health conditions. I have always known it started with my grandparents but never got to visually see the connection until now. For example, addiction runs in my family. For example, it is something that my paternal grandfather dealt with, and then 5/6 brothers on my father's side also dealt with or are still experiencing the ongoing effects. My father, Daniel Johnson, being the youngest by an 18-year age gap, witnessed this growing up and abstained from the substances his brothers and fathers abused. Through this activity, I also was able to see the significant impact that cancer has had on my family. On my mother's side of the family for example skin cancer is very prevalent. Because of my grandparent's history with Melanoma, we make it a priority in our family to get annual screenings to try to catch it early if it were to occur. Knowing and understanding your family history can be helpful in prevention like the case with my grandparents. Knowing my mother's history in my case is also very important. My mother was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis when she gave birth to me so when in the past couple of years I have become very ill with lab work showing my immune system attacking itself it is good to know that his condition could

very well be an explanation to the systems I am currently dealing with. Although there is no diagnosis yet my doctors look at my family history to run the appropriate tests.

Many of the risk factors that lie in my family genogram are cancer and heart problems. My father and paternal grandmother both deal with heart issues such as hypertension, high cholesterol, and heart attack. Knowing the risk factors that I can locate in my health genogram can help me make the correct lifestyle choices to lower my chances of this occurring to me. Although conditions like this environment and lifestyle can influence our family one condition that is very common that is hard to control is anxiety. Anxiety runs on both sides of my family and has, unfortunately, affected my sibling and me. We both were diagnosed at young ages and have had to learn to live with the effects of it. Seeing how many consciousnesses in my family were passed down makes me wonder how many more conditions will be passed on to the next generations. For example, my dad has always dealt with GERD, or gastroesophageal reflux disease, so it was not a shock when I was born. I had a severe case of GERD and had to spend time in the NICU because of complications from it. It is something we both still deal with today and could be something that counts through generations.

In conclusion, I have learned that knowing your healthy family history can be super beneficial. I have been able to take the preventive steps needed to watch out for certain conditions, prevent certain conditions, and just be aware of possibilities that may happen to me in regard to my health. This assignment was very helpful. I was able to visualize my family pedigree, I am a visual learner so this is definitely something I will refer to later on in regard to my health history. Having a thoughtful conversation with my parents to get this information was also beneficial in hearing how it has impacted them and the way they choose to raise their family. For example the addictions and the effect of esophageal cancer and lung cancer from addiction

and how my father has tried his best to abstain and teach his family to abstain from these substances. Overall this assignment was super helpful.