

## Genetic Science Spotlight

### Genetic Counseling Should Be An Integral Part of Non-Invasive Prenatal Screening, ACMG recommends



Non-invasive prenatal screening (NIPS), or commonly referred to as non-invasive prenatal test (NIPT), has been integrated into private prenatal care in Hong Kong in the recent years. As a screening tool for expectant mothers and their babies simply requiring blood sample from the mother, NIPS on one hand bears no risk of miscarriage as traditional invasive tests do; on the other hand, screening test results can be more elusive and may require trained personnel specializing in medical genetics to interpret. To deliver meaningful screening results and thence assist patients in making informed decisions, pre- and post-test counseling is crucial. Genetic counseling is a patient-centered communication process to establish patient desire and expectations, and the service providers should have thorough understanding of the test. Not only are genetic counseling sessions educational, they also bear the responsibility to facilitate patients' independent decision making on course of action when they are fully aware of the necessary facts, alternatives, and anticipated consequences. The counselor should remain client-centered, indirective, and respectful of patient preferences. In the context of integrating NIPS into prenatal care, American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) recommends all NIPS providers to make pre- and post-test counseling and education accessible to all pregnant women.


LeGENE is the appointed genetic counseling service provider for SafeT21 NIPS by Xcelom since February 2017.

<http://www.nature.com/gim/journal/v18/n10/full/gim201697a.html>

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