



# A Healthy Conversation

## *You'll Be Thankful to Know Your Family's Health History*

**A**s you gather together this holiday season, make some time to talk about health issues that may run in your family. It's an important part of your family's story, and knowing any family health risks could help protect the lives of generations to come.

### **Here are some questions to get you started:**

- What are some of the chronic diseases that our parents and grandparents have experienced, such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol?
- Has anyone had any other serious diseases, such as cancer or stroke? What type of cancer?
- Do you know how old our relatives were when they were diagnosed?
- What were the causes and ages of death for relatives who have passed?
- What's our family's ancestry? From what countries or regions did our ancestors come to the United States?

Record this information in a family health history. Some conditions like diabetes, heart disease and osteoporosis run in families, along with some types of cancer including colorectal and breast cancer. Armed with this important family information, ask your physician or nurse about your potential risks and whether there are screening tests to help you detect them early.