Answers to Common Questions about Companion Diagnostic Testing for Lynparza (olaparib)

Q: What is Lynparza?
A: Lynparza (also known as olaparib) is a new medication approved by the FDA to treat ovarian, fallopian tube, and primary peritoneal cancer in women with an inherited BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 mutation who have received three or more previous chemotherapy treatments.

Q: Which patients are eligible for Lynparza?
A: Lynparza is FDA-approved for use in patients with an inherited BRCA mutation and ovarian, fallopian tube, or primary peritoneal cancer who have already received three or more rounds of chemotherapy treatments.

Q: What is a companion diagnostic test?
A: A companion diagnostic is a medical test, which provides information required for the safe and effective use of a corresponding drug. The test helps health care professionals determine whether a particular drug’s benefits to patients will outweigh any potential serious side effects or risks, ultimately leading to targeted, more personalized treatments.

In the case of Lynparza, because the drug showed efficacy in advanced ovarian cancer patients with inherited BRCA mutations, the FDA required a companion diagnostic test in conjunction with approval of the drug. Myriad Genetic Laboratories, Inc. developed BRACAnalysis CDx™ – the BRCA test used for the Lynparza research – and applied for, and was granted, FDA approval of the test. Currently, Myriad’s test is the only test with FDA approval as a companion diagnostic for Lynparza.

Q: Does FDA approval of a lab test mean it is better than a similar test from another lab that is not FDA-approved?
A: FDA approval indicates that the performance of the test has been reviewed and deemed safe and effective. It does not mean that a particular brand of test is superior to similar tests from other companies. Since 2013, many labs have been providing BRCA testing. Currently, the majority of diagnostic tests in the U.S. are not FDA-approved or regulated. Instead, the laboratories are overseen by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services through the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) to ensure accurate and reliable test results.

Other companies offering BRCA testing have the opportunity to demonstrate that their test is safe and effective by applying for FDA approval of their test as a companion diagnostic. The process involves submitting a premarket approval (PMA) application that contains
sufficient scientific evidence to assure that the laboratory test is safe and effective for its intended use. FDA regulations provide 180 days to review the submission and make a determination.

Many factors go into the selection of laboratory tests by health care providers. Ask your genetics professional which test is right for your situation.

**Q:** What does this mean for ovarian cancer patients who have a known BRCA mutation that was detected by another genetic testing lab?

**A:** A positive BRCA test result from a qualified lab is considered sufficient by genetics experts for recommending risk-management options such as chemoprevention, increased surveillance, or prophylactic surgery. It is ultimately up to health care providers to determine if test results from another lab are appropriate to qualify a patient for Lynparza. Coverage of the diagnostic test or therapy by the health insurer may also influence this decision. Some health insurers do not cover off-label medication use. However, depending on the individual situation, it may be possible to appeal a decision by a health insurer.

**Q:** If a woman with a known BRCA mutation in the family wants to take Lynparza, is she required to undergo comprehensive BRCA gene testing via BRACAnalysis CDx or is a single-site test sufficient?

**A:** While Myriad’s comprehensive BRACAnalysis CDx test is the only FDA-approved companion diagnostic for Lynparza, current standard-of-care for individuals with a known hereditary mutation in the family is to undergo single-site testing for the mutation identified. This is a prudent and economical approach to genetic testing. It is up to the patient and her health care team to determine if more comprehensive testing is warranted. Again, coverage of the diagnostic test by one’s health insurance may also be a factor.

**Q:** Is there any liability associated with the use of a diagnostic test not approved by the FDA?

**A:** Use of a test not approved as a companion diagnostic is considered “off label” use. Off-label use of a diagnostic test is a matter of medical judgment by health care providers in consideration of the following:

- made with the patient’s knowledge
- predominantly motivated by a desire to benefit the patient
- based on the physician’s own expert medical opinion
- generally supported by sound scientific evidence and/or the opinions of colleagues in the field

The FDA does not have the authority to regulate the practice of medicine. In other words, FDA does not tell healthcare providers what they can or cannot prescribe to their patients.