



Henry Lynch, MD

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Biography

Dr. Henry Lynch established Creighton's Hereditary Cancer Prevention Clinic in 1984, an interdisciplinary clinic where families can find information and services related to all hereditary cancers. Dr. Lynch had the idea to look at cancer from a genetics perspective (he postulated that cancer could be hereditary) rather than focusing exclusively from an environmental point of view (which at the time was the only acceptable cause for cancer in the medical circles). This idea became the main focus of his research for years to come.

Dr. Lynch developed what are today regarded as the cardinal principles of cancer genetics: early age of onset of the disease, specific pattern of multiple primary cancers, and Mendelian patterns of inheritance in hundreds of extended families worldwide.

With the discovery by other researchers of the genes that cause Lynch syndrome, it is possible to predict with nearly 90% accuracy the risk of the disease in patients with direct germline mutations. With early detection, Lynch syndrome and other colon cancers are potentially curable in 80 to 90% of patients. Dr. Lynch also demonstrated the Mendelian inheritance patterns for certain breast and ovarian cancers, now known as Hereditary Breast/Ovarian Cancer syndrome; this work contributed to the discovery in recent years of the *BRCA1* and *BRCA2* breast cancer genes.

Areas of Interest

Diagnosis, prevention, counseling and treatment of hereditary disorders, primarily cancer.