



**Global Genes™**

Allies in Rare Disease

## How to Discuss Genetic Disease with Your Loved Ones

**April 1, 2015**

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# Meet Today's Panelists:



**Jenna Miller**  
Recombine



**Michelle Fox**  
Invitae



**Cyndi Frank**  
National Gaucher Foundation



**Janet Mills**  
cureCADASIL Association

## Moderator:



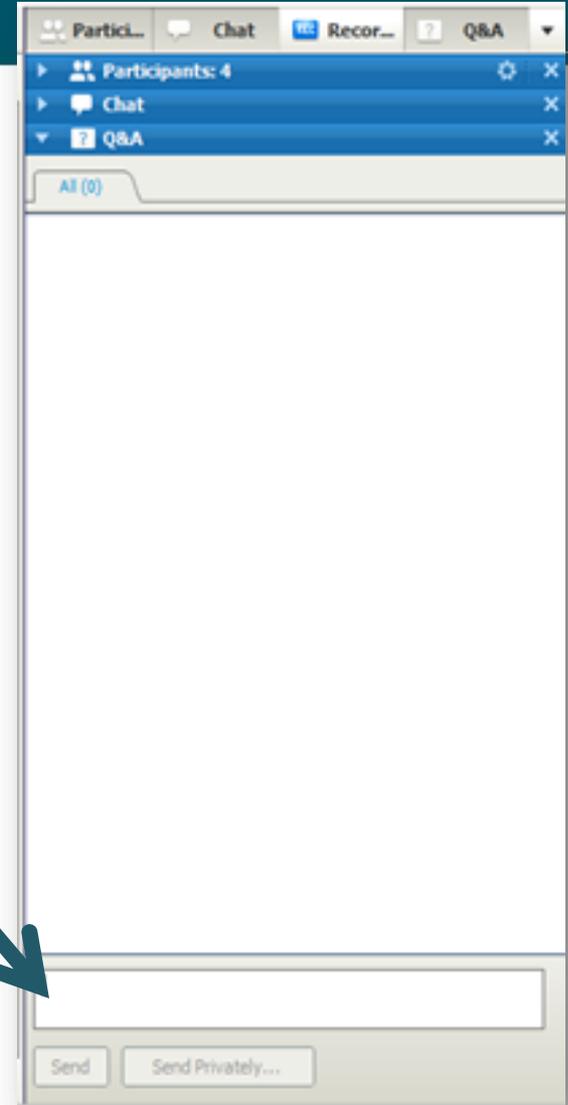
**Daniel Levine**  
Levine Media Group

# Submit Your Questions

Throughout the webinar, panelists will be taking questions from the audience

To send in questions, please use WebEx's Q&A feature in the bottom right hand corner

Please feel free to submit questions throughout the presentation





# Jenna Miller, MS, CGC

Genetic Counselor

# Patterns of Inheritance: Autosomal Dominant



FATHER



AFFECTED MOTHER



UNAFFECTED  
DAUGHTER  
25%



UNAFFECTED  
SON  
25%



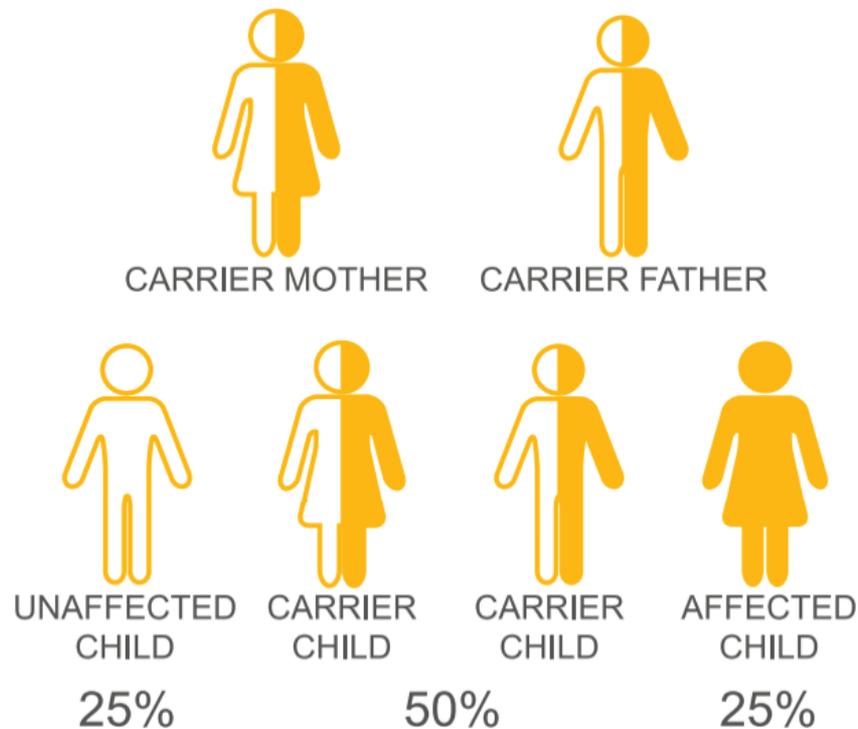
AFFECTED  
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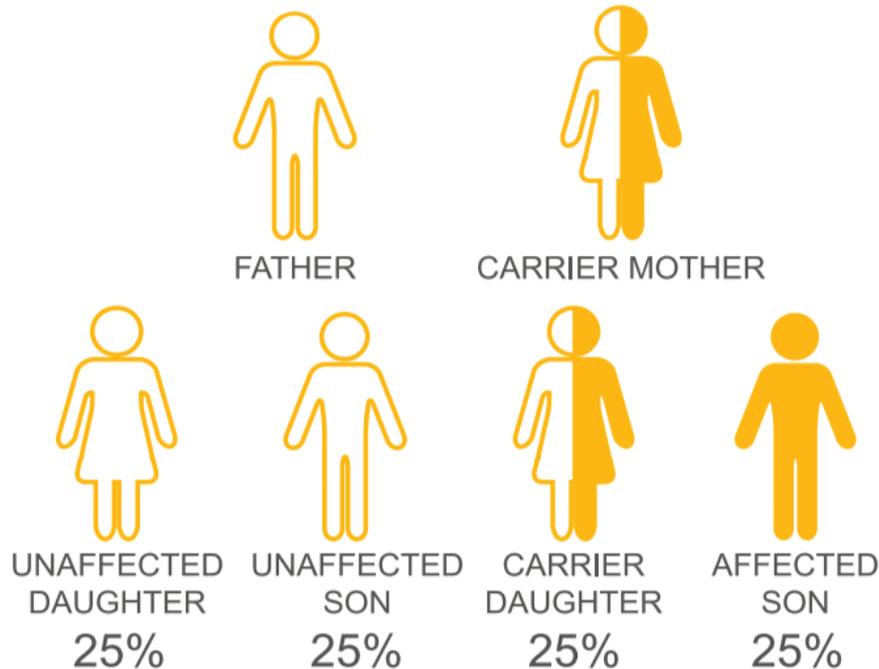
If one partner carries a mutation for an autosomal dominant genetic disease, the couple's child has a **1 in 2 (50%) chance** of having that genetic disease.

# Patterns of Inheritance: Autosomal Recessive



If both partners carry mutations for an autosomal recessive genetic disease, their child has a **1 in 4 (25%) chance** of having that genetic disease.

# Patterns of Inheritance: X-Linked Recessive



If the female partner is a carrier of an X-linked genetic disease, her male child has a **1 in 2 (50%) chance** of having that genetic disease.



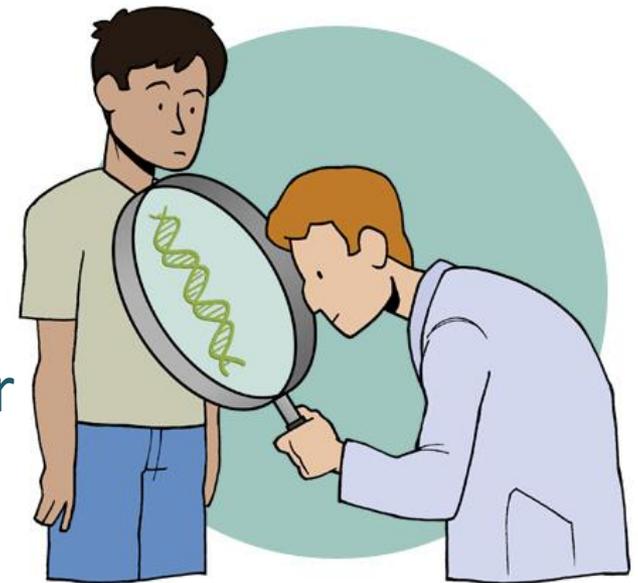
INVITAE

# Michelle Fox, MS, LCGC

Genetic Counselor Consultant\*

# Finding an Answer

- Seeking an underlying diagnosis for child/individual with possible genetic disorder
- Different approaches:
  - Wanting to know
  - Denial
- For many parents, knowing is better than not knowing
- Not always bad news
- Finding an answer is just the beginning



# Communicating Abnormal Results

- Explain the results of an abnormal genetic test
- What does it mean for my child?
- What does it mean for us/our families?
- What should we do?
- Support group information
- Put parents/patients in touch with others
- Communicate with the primary doctor and other specialists



# Genetic Counseling Plan

- Giving results in person/phone
- Who should attend the session?
- Would you like to speak without your child in the room?
- Explaining when it is vital that your child know information about his/her diagnosis
- Speaking to the child about genetic disease



# Family Communication

- You are the only person that can communicate information about genetic testing/genetic diagnosis with other family members
- Give accurate information
- Share genetic test reports/family member can be specific when seeking genetic testing
- Give family members the name/contact information of your genetic counselor



# Starting the Conversation

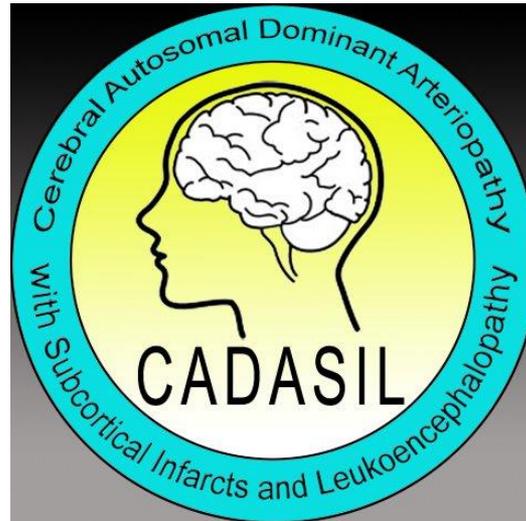
- Gathering information about your family history
- Picking the right time to talk to your family about a genetic disorder
  - Family dinners
  - Holiday celebrations
  - Family reunions



# Janet Mills

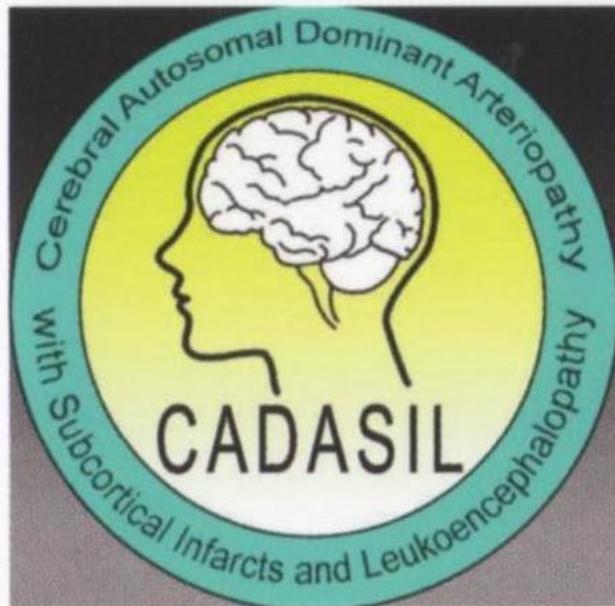
## Trustee and Patient Advocate

CADASIL is caused by a mutation of the Notch 3 gene on the 19<sup>th</sup> chromosome



Our blood vessels, especially those in the brain, are compromised with genetic material.

# CADASIL



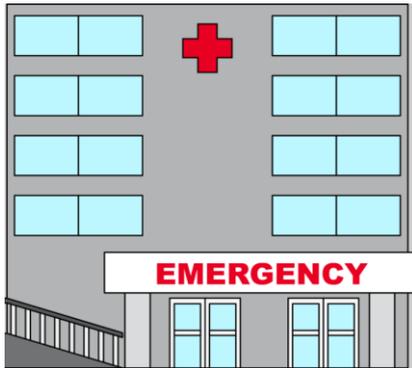
## Often misdiagnosed as MS or other neurological disorders

*Symptoms may include:*

- Migraines with aura → Began in my teens
- Headaches/pressure in head → Began in my teens
- Numbness/tingling in extremities → Experience now
- Mood disorders/anxiety/depression → Began in my teens
- Fatigue/apathy → Experience now
- Ischemic episodes/TIAs → Led to seeking dx/diagnosis
- Dizziness/balance/gait problems → Led to seeking dx
- Visual disturbances → Led to seeking dx
- Cognitive/memory issues → Experience now
- Seizures/spells → Led to seeking dx
- Stroke/hemiparesis
- Progressive dementia

Other symptoms I have: nausea and lightheadedness; feeling like I have the flu.

# Road to Diagnosis



Black-out → Husband took me to  
Emergency Room

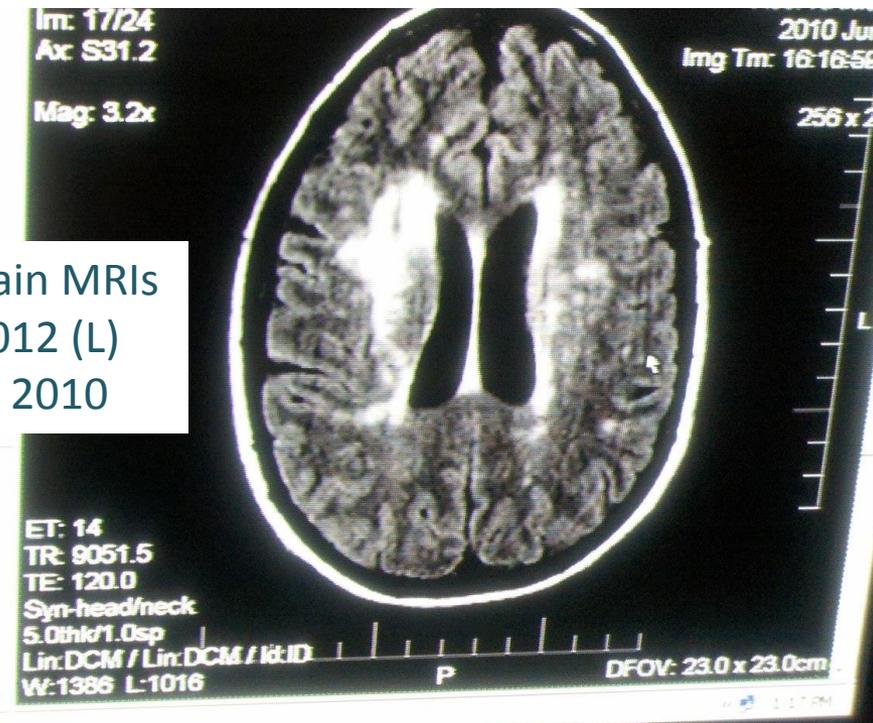
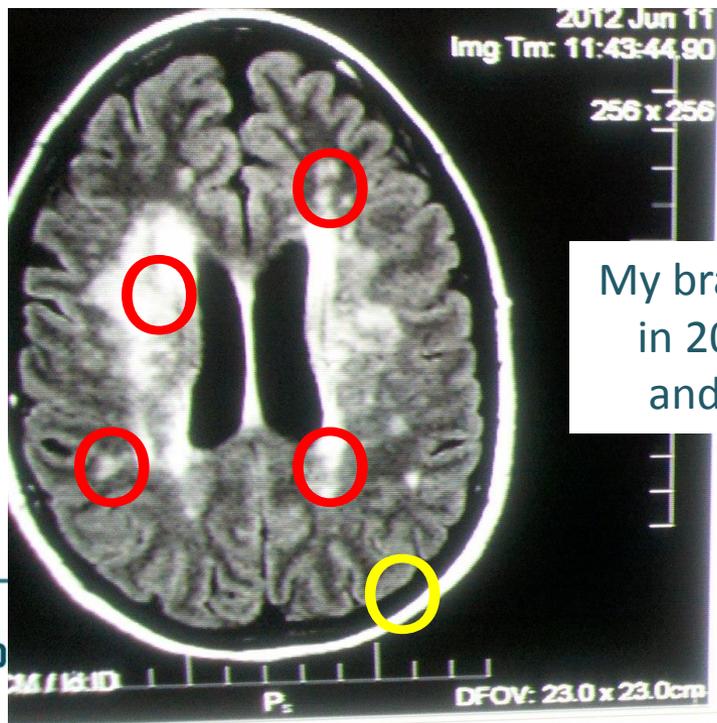
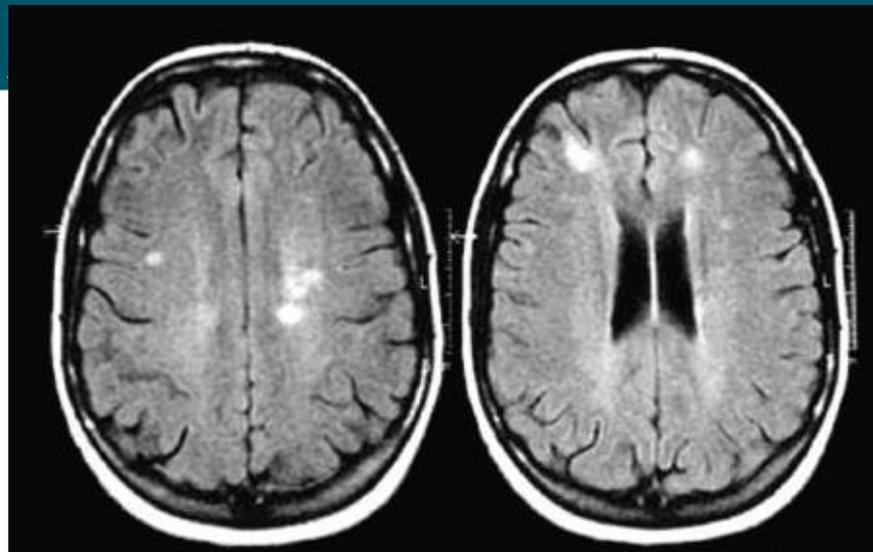
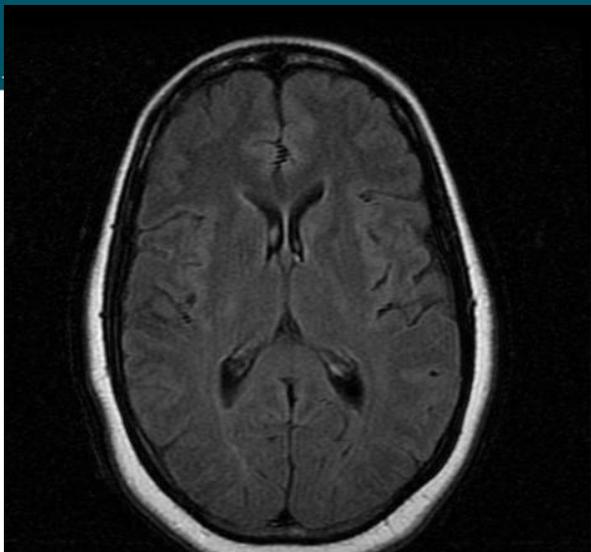
CT scan of head indicated → Brain MRI



Brain MRI results: “We believe you have MS.”

# Normal Brain MRI

# MS patient with mild to moderate symptoms



My brain MRIs  
in 2012 (L)  
and 2010

# Ruling Out MS and Other Conditions

- Various blood screenings (generally normal)
- Spinal tap (normal)
- Optic nerve (normal)
- EEG (normal; more intensive testing after diagnosis showed brain activity never seen before by neuropsychologist)
- EKG (normal)
- Skeletal x-rays (some irregularities)



# Ruling Out MS and Other Conditions



My local neurologist in WY mentioned CADASIL at my 1<sup>st</sup> appointment with him soon after my 1<sup>st</sup> brain MRI, but since it is a genetic disease and there is **no history in my family**, we didn't seriously consider it for many months and after other tests came back negative or inconclusive.

An MS specialist in CO also suspected CADASIL, so my blood was drawn for the specific CADASIL diagnostic test, which was sent to Athena/Quest Labs in MA.

After a 6 week wait, the results came back positive.

We all saw **a geneticist and a genetic counselor** before anyone else was tested. They helped my family members understand the inheritance pattern of CADASIL and how “autosomal dominant” meant it only takes the DNA from one affected parent to pass on the mutation. Every offspring of an affected parent has a **50/50 chance** of having the mutation that causes CADASIL.



I am NOT a hypochondriac!

There really IS something wrong with my brain!

Now I have an answer for all these weird symptoms!

**FINALLY!**

I am NOT going insane!

I no longer feel misunderstood and suicidal!

This is *no one's* fault!

# Who Needs to Know, and Why?

## My doctors

Any medical professional I come in contact with needs to know the risks to me for any procedure, even routine ones.

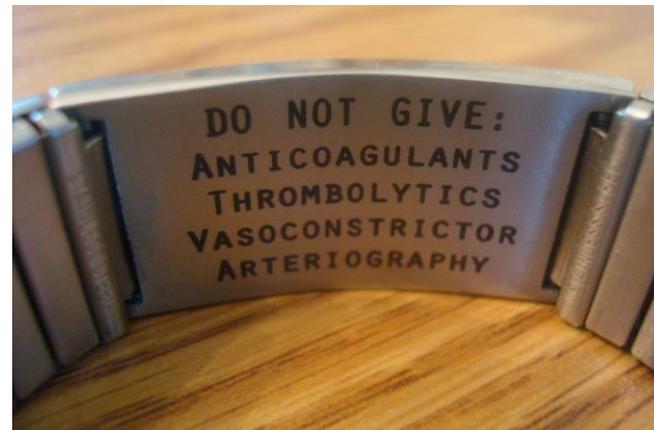
## My family

Especially those biologically related to me, as they could have CADASIL also, which places them at risk for stroke.

## My friends

They may be with me when I have a TIA, stroke, or severe migraine. They need to know where I keep my medical info and what they can do to help.

If a CADASIL patient has a stroke, s/he is cautioned against receiving TPAs or other typically used stroke medications at the hospital due to the risk of a fatal cerebral hemorrhage.



# Final Thoughts and Pieces of Advice



Some patients with genetic conditions find it difficult to secure:

- Affordable medical insurance
- Life insurance
- Long term care coverage,
- Other services

I strongly recommend seeing a genetic counselor and considering all the things you need to have in place before being tested for a genetic condition.

For more information about  
CADASIL, go to:  
[curecadasil.org](http://curecadasil.org)





# Cyndi Frank

Director of Patient Advocacy and Meetings

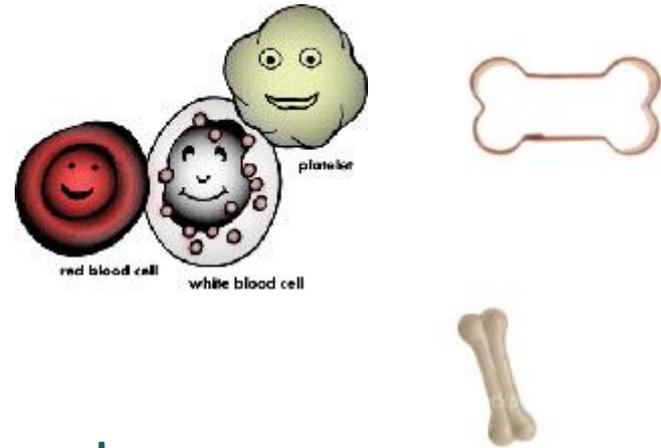
# What is Gaucher Disease?

- Autosomal recessive genetic disorder caused by the deficiency of the enzyme glucocerebrosidase
- Most common Jewish genetic disease affecting Ashkenazi Jews
- Inherited metabolic disorder caused by a gene mutation on the first chromosome
- Most common lysosomal storage disease



# Typical Type 1 Gaucher Symptoms

- Bone pain, fractures, joint replacements
- Excessive bleeding
- Easy bruising
- Enlarged liver and spleen
- Extremely low red blood counts
- Brown spots and yellow skin from liver disease
- Extreme fatigue
- Weak immune system
- Possible lung involvement



# Diagnosis:

- Symptomatic since infancy
- Misdiagnosed at age 12 with malnutrition, then leukemia
- After 1 year of bi-weekly blood tests, finally diagnosed in 1976 at age 13 (yes, that makes me 51)
- No treatment and no hope

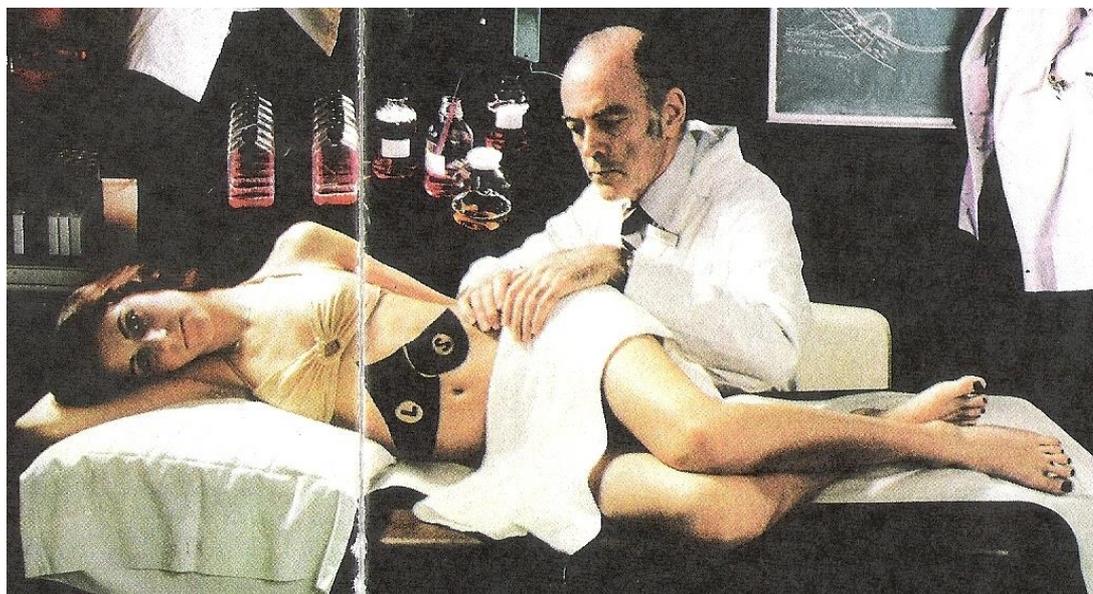


# Prognosis:

- The specialists told my parents
- My parents told me
  - No treatment
  - Degenerative disease
  - Will use a wheel chair by 20
  - Probably won't live past 30



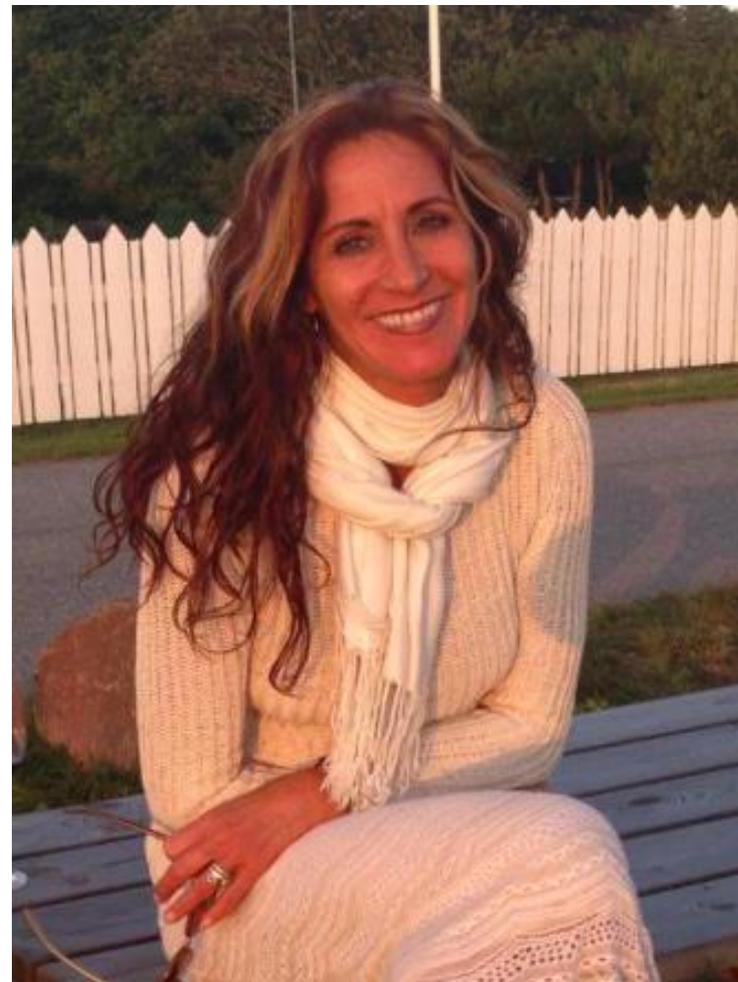
# Acting Out:



- Dismissal
- Rebellion
- Self pity
- And the crazy things teens do

# Present & Future

Cyndi Frank  
National Gaucher Foundation  
Phone: 415.839.5155  
Toll Free: 877.649.2742  
[cyndi@gaucherdisease.org](mailto:cyndi@gaucherdisease.org)  
[www.gaucherdisease.org](http://www.gaucherdisease.org)



# Jenna's Niece, Ivy

Hi, My name is Ivy.

You may have noticed my skin is different than yours.

I have a condition called Epidermalytic Hyperkeratosis (EHK)

Don't worry it's not contagious. It's just how my skin is.

My parents take good care of my skin. But sometimes it hurts.

Sometimes I get blisters, or too hot.

My skin grows really fast, especially on my hands and feet.

That's why they look yellowish.

I use a lot of lotion and I love to be held by my Mom.

I'm just a normal girl with extra special skin.

If you have more questions visit [firstskinfoundation.org](http://firstskinfoundation.org)

# Doctors, Genetic Counselors & Angels

- Treating the physical aspects of disease
- Treating the emotional aspects of disease
  - Getting support
  - Figuring out how to manage chronic disease
  - Figuring out how to move forward



# Genetic Counseling

Purpose is to communicate complex information about genetic disorders:

- Inheritance pattern
- Implications for patient and family members
- Testing options
- Management/treatment options
- Support and resources



Shared decision making

Follow up

# Genetic Counseling Training

- Masters level training in genetics
- 2 year programs accredited by the American Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC)
- Certification by the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC)
- Course work and on the job training
- Emphasis on communication skills
- Team work



# Genetics Resources

- Check with your genetic counselor or physician
- Seek appropriate specialist/treatment when you can
- Ask questions about your family history
- Genesinlife.org
- Invitae.com
- Recombine.com
- Global Genes Toolkit on Genetics/Genetic Testing

# Thank You Panelists!



**Jenna Miller**  
Recombine



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## Moderator:



**Daniel Levine**  
Levine Media Group

# Next Upcoming RARE Webinar

## Leveraging a Rare Disease Center of Excellence



June 1<sup>st</sup> at 10 am PST

Register today at

<http://globalgenes.org/june2015webinar/>