

A Bit Of Thought Makes Finding Out Medical Risks Less Scary

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NPR:

Would you want to know your risk of getting heart disease? Diabetes? Or an inherited form of breast cancer?

Preventive medicine is all about knowing health risks and taking action to avoid them. But many people just don't want to know. As many as 55 percent of people who get tested for the HIV virus never return to get their test results. People like , who took a genetic test to determine her risk of breast cancer and had a preventive double mastectomy to reduce that risk, may be the exception.

Researchers at the University of Florida asked people to contemplate reasons why they would avoid finding out about their risk of getting heart disease or diabetes, things like "learning that I am at high risk for diabetes would be distressing" or "I might regret finding out."

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"Our whole idea is that contemplation works by getting people to slow down and make what's the best decision for them at the time," says Jenny Howell, a graduate student in psychology at the University of Florida who led the study.

The results were published online in the journal *Psychological Science*.

Read the whole story: [NPR](#)