

IT'S TIME FOR OVARY-ACTION

Di, Ovarian Cancer Support Nurse and Stacey, diagnosed at 38.



What everyone should know about ovarian cancer

About Ovarian Cancer



Each year in Australia, **over 1500 women** will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer and **over 1000** will die from the disease.



There is **no effective screening program** for ovarian cancer, so the best way of detecting the disease is to know the signs and symptoms.



In Australia, the overall **five year survival rate** for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer is **46%**. In comparison, the overall five year survival rate for women diagnosed with breast cancer is 91%.

Risk factors



- A **family history** of ovarian cancer – the risk of developing ovarian cancer is higher if 1 or more blood relatives (such as mother, sister or daughter) has had ovarian cancer
- Family history of breast or colon cancer
- A mutation in 1 of several known genes. Up to 15% of all cases of invasive ovarian cancer involve the inheritance of a mutated gene. Women who have inherited mutations in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes have a substantially increased risk of ovarian and breast cancer. Women with Lynch syndrome (also known as hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer or HNPCC) also have an increased lifetime risk of ovarian cancer



- Increasing age



- Medical conditions such as endometriosis



- Use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT)



- Tobacco smoking



- Obesity

Like to know more?

Visit ovariancancer.net.au or call our Helpline on **1300 660 334**.

Signs & Symptoms

The symptoms of ovarian cancer can be vague and similar to other medical conditions. It's important to see your GP if you experience any of these symptoms, especially if they are unusual for you or persistent. Download a Symptoms Diary from ovariancancer.net.au or pick one up from selected TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacies to track symptoms that may not be usual for you.

Unexplained fatigue

Unexplained weight gain or loss

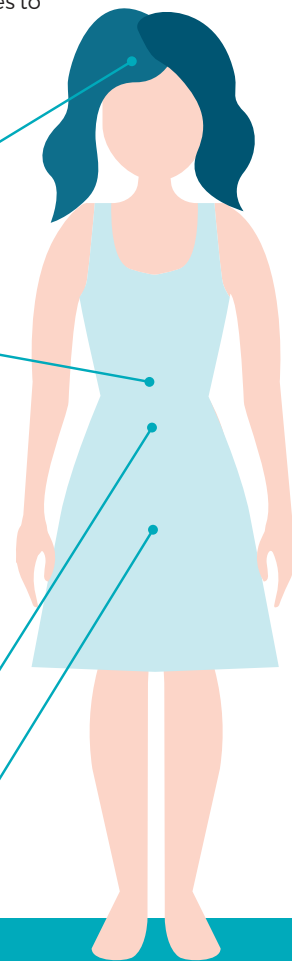
Changes in bowel habits, such as constipation

Increased abdominal size or persistent abdominal bloating

Abdominal or pelvic (lower tummy) pain

Appetite loss, feeling full quickly or indigestion

Urinary changes, such as frequency or urgency



“There is no effective screening program to detect ovarian cancer in asymptomatic women. A cervical cancer screening test DOES NOT detect ovarian cancer.”

To learn more about ovarian cancer visit ovariancancer.net.au or call **1300 660 334**.

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What do you do if you experience these symptoms?

It is important to remember all the symptoms mentioned here can be caused by other, less serious medical conditions. However, if you have any of them, you should see your doctor, particularly if the symptoms are persistent and troublesome. They will be able to examine you and if necessary, do further tests to find the cause of your problems.

What to ask your GP if you are still concerned?

Symptoms for ovarian cancer can be vague and non-specific. However, persistent symptoms should be investigated by your GP. Investigations should include:

- A general and pelvic examination
- Pelvic ultrasound (preferably transvaginal)
- Routine blood tests including CA125 blood test
- CT scan (if appropriate)

Results should be available within one week. If ovarian cancer is suspected, you should be referred to a specialist (gynaecological oncologist) for further testing within two weeks.

Refer to the Cancer Council for more information on the Optimal Care Pathway.

Choose a Gynaecological Oncologist for the best outcomes

If your specialist suspects you may have ovarian cancer you may need to have surgery to remove one or both of your ovaries. It is important this operation is performed by a surgeon who regularly does this type of surgery (a gynaecological oncologist). Research shows improved survival outcomes for women with ovarian cancer when their surgery is done by a specialist gynaecological oncologist.

All women diagnosed with ovarian cancer should be referred to a specialist multidisciplinary team who specialise in ovarian cancer. This team will recommend the best course of treatment for your individual situation. Treatment options may include surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and newer targeted therapies.

You know your body best, so trust your instincts. Be aware of the symptoms of ovarian cancer, and if you remain concerned about a persistent symptom after seeing your doctor, it's ok to get a second opinion.

Getting support

Ovarian Cancer Australia offers information on support services and advice about ovarian cancer symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and wellbeing.

Contact Ovarian Cancer Australia's Helpline Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm (AEST) on 1300 660 334, or alternatively email support@ovariancancer.net.au



Sue, Ovarian Cancer Support Nurse.



Ovary-actions speak louder than words.

February is Ovarian Cancer Awareness month, your opportunity to support the most underfunded and the deadliest female cancer in Australia. Together we can help fund high-impact research and support the mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and partners who need it most.

Help raise awareness and funds by:

- hosting a fundraising event at ovariancancer.net.au/fundraise
- donating at ovariancancer.net.au

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Connect with us

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