

Teal Ribbon Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization that raises funds to advance ovarian cancer research towards a cure: advocating for early diagnostic treatment programs to improve the lives of ovarian cancer survivors.

## Detecting Ovarian Cancer Early is key to saving women's lives.

### Did you know...?

...Ovarian cancer is the leading cause of death amongst gynecologic cancers.

...1 in 58 women will develop ovarian cancer.

...Breast Cancer survivors are 4 times greater at risk

...Ovarian Cancer is difficult to diagnose & there is no reliable screening test.

...22,000 will be diagnosed this year & 15,000 will die.

### What every woman should know:

- Ovarian cancer is a serious and under-recognized threat to women's health.
- Ovarian cancer kills more women than all the Gynecologic Cancers combined.
- Ovarian cancer occurs in 1 in 58 women.
- The American Cancer Society estimates that in the United States this year, there will be over 20,000 new cases of ovarian cancer and over 15,000 women will die.
- Ovarian cancer is very treatable when caught early, yet the vast majority of cases are not diagnosed until too late. When ovarian cancer is caught before it has spread outside the ovaries, more than 90% will survive 5 years.
- Only 24% of ovarian cancer is caught early.
- There is no reliable screening test for the early detection of ovarian cancer.
- The Pap smear only checks for cervical cancer.

### Symptoms:

Symptoms are often vague and easily confused with other diseases. However, new studies indicate that ovarian cancer has recognizable symptoms, even early stages of the disease.

Knowing those symptoms can help save women's lives. Early recognition of symptoms is the best way to save women's lives.

Symptoms include:

- Bloating or discomfort
- Menstrual disorders, pain during intercourse
- Backaches
- Abdominal pressure
- Indigestion or gas
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Fatigue

Take action if any symptoms last more than 2-3 weeks. If ovarian cancer is suspected, ask to see a gynecological oncologist. Early detection is key to saving women's lives.

### Myths and Facts About Ovarian Cancer

**Myth: Pap test is a diagnostic tool for ovarian cancer.**

Fact: A pap test only diagnoses cervical cancer.

**Myth: Ovarian cancer has no symptoms.**

Fact: Women DO report symptoms. Most symptoms are not gynecologic.

**Myth: There are no risk factors for ovarian cancer.**

Fact: Risk factors for this disease include: increasing age, family history of ovarian, breast or colorectal cancer, personal history of breast cancer, never bearing a child or having a child later in life, using talc in the genital area for several years, use of hormone replacement therapy.

**Myth: A CA-125 blood test always indicates ovarian cancer.**

Fact: It is not uncommon for pre-menopausal women to have a high CA-125 level due to noncancerous conditions such as uterine fibroids, inflammation of the fallopian tubes, or endometriosis. The CA-125 blood test is more accurate in post-menopausal women. Currently, there is no screening test for detecting ovarian cancer.

**Myth: If ovarian cancer does not run in my family, I cannot get it.**

Fact: All women are at risk for ovarian cancer. Only 10% of cases are hereditary.

**Myth: Ovarian cancer has no cure.**

Fact: If detected early and treated properly, there is a 90% chance of survival.

**Myth: Fertility drugs cause ovarian cancer.**

Fact: Recent studies have shown that ovarian cancer risk was not increased by the use of fertility drugs but rather by infertility itself.

**Myth: Women who have their ovaries removed cannot get ovarian cancer.**

Fact: Women who have their ovaries removed reduce their risk but still CAN get ovarian cancer.

**Myth: There is a way to prevent ovarian cancer.**

Fact: Currently, there is no way to prevent ovarian cancer with 100% certainty. However, there are several things that can help reduce risk. Research has shown that:

- Oral contraceptives can reduce the risk of ovarian cancer by 50% if taken for at least 5 years.
- Pregnancy and breast-feeding significantly reduces ovarian cancer risk.
- Tubal ligation (tying the fallopian tubes), prophylactic oophorectomy (having both ovaries removed as a preventive measure) and hysterectomy reduce risk.