

Be aware of ovarian cancer

About half of the women who are diagnosed with ovarian cancer are 63 years or older

1 Introduction

Ovarian cancer ranks fifth in cancer deaths among women, accounting for more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system. Women's health is delicate and should be taken very seriously. Please use this guide to learn more about ovarian cancer cause, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

2 Cause

As with most cancers the direct cause is not known, however there are several identified risk factors. Woman who are of an older age, have a family history of ovarian cancer, or undergone estrogen hormone replacement therapy; are more at risk for developing ovarian cancer. There are 3 main types of ovarian cancer:

- Epithelial tumors
- Stromal tumors
- Germ cell tumors

3 Symptoms

In early development of ovarian cancer, a patient rarely suffers from symptoms. As the cancer progresses more symptoms become evident but can resemble the symptoms of many other conditions. Some of these symptoms include:

- weight loss
- pelvic pain
- constipation
- abdominal bloating or swelling
- frequent urge to urinate

4 Diagnosis

There are a range of procedures and tests that are used to diagnose ovarian cancer:

- pelvic exam – determines any possible growth is present
- imaging tests – confirms presence, size, and location of growth
- blood tests – assess organ function
- biopsy/surgery – confirms diagnosis

5 Treatment

After diagnosis and proper assignment of cancer stage is necessary to move forward with treatment. Course of treatment will depend on cancer stage, overall health of the patient and other factors. The most common treatment is surgery to remove the affected ovary or ovaries. Chemotherapy and targeted therapy may be needed in addition to or in lieu of surgery.

Did you know?

Ovarian cancer is the fifth most deadly cancer for women and one in 78 women will be diagnosed with it.

For more information on ovarian cancer, please visit www.cancer.org

References:

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/ovarian-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/signs-and-symptoms.html>

<https://medlineplus.gov/ovariancancer.html>