



WomensHealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

Ovarian Cancer

Q: What is ovarian cancer?

A: Cancer is a disease in which certain body cells don't function right, divide very fast, and produce too much tissue that forms a tumor. Ovarian cancer is cancer in the ovaries, the female reproductive organs located in the pelvis. The ovaries make female hormones and store eggs that, if fertilized by sperm, can develop into a baby. Women have two ovaries, one on each side of the uterus. Tumors found in the ovaries may be non-cancerous tissue growths (cysts) or cancerous growths that may spread to other parts of the body.

Q: Why should I be concerned about ovarian cancer?

A: About 1 in every 57 women in the United States will develop ovarian can-

cer. Most cases occur in women over the age of 50, but this disease can also affect younger women. Ovarian cancer causes more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system. The sooner ovarian cancer is found and treated, the better a woman's chance for recovery. But ovarian cancer is hard to detect early. Many times, women with ovarian cancer have no symptoms or just mild symptoms until the disease is in an advanced stage. Scientists are studying ways to detect ovarian cancer before symptoms develop.

Q: Where can I learn more about ovarian cancer?

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the federal government's authority on ovarian cancer. Contact them at 800-4-CANCER (800-422-6237) or go to the following web site: <http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancerinfo/wyntk/ovary> ■

For More Information . . .

You also can find out more about ovarian cancer by contacting the National Women's Health Information Center (800-994-9662) or the following organizations:

National Cancer Institute
 Cancer Information Service
 Phone: (800) 422-6237
 Internet Address: <http://cis.nci.nih.gov>

Gynecologic Cancer Foundation
 Phone: (800) 444-4441
 Internet Address: <http://www.wcn.org/gcf>

American Cancer Society
 Phone: (800)-ACS-2345
 Internet Address: <http://www.cancer.org>

National Ovarian Cancer Coalition
 Phone: (561) 393-0005
 Internet Address: <http://www.ovarian.org>