



womenshealth.gov

1-800-994-9662

TDD: 1-888-220-5446

Cancer of the Uterus

Q: What is cancer of the uterus?

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. Cancer of the uterus is cancer in the womb, the hollow, pear-shaped organ where a baby grows during a woman's pregnancy. There are different types of uterine cancers. Two types are endometrial cancer and uterine sarcomas. In the United States, endometrial cancer is a common cancer of the female reproductive system. This type of cancer happens when cancer begins in the tissue lining the uterus (endometrium). Uterine sarcomas occur when cancer grows in the muscles or other supporting tissues in

the uterus. Uterine sarcomas account for only a small portion of cancers of the uterus.

Q: Why should I be concerned about cancer of the uterus?

A: Some women who get uterine cancer have certain risk factors, or things in their life that cause them to have a higher chance of getting this disease. But there are women who get uterine cancer who do not have any of these high risk factors. Uterine cancer usually occurs after menopause. But it may also occur around the time that menopause begins. Abnormal vaginal bleeding is the most common symptom of uterine cancer. Bleeding may start as a watery, blood-streaked flow that gradually contains more blood. Women should not assume that abnormal vaginal bleeding is part of menopause. If you have abnormal vaginal bleeding after menopause, talk with your health care provider. ■

For more information

To learn more about cancer of the uterus, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/knowledge> or the National Cancer Institute web site <http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancerinfo/wyntk/uterus>.

You also can find out more about cancer of uterus by contacting the Womenshealth.gov Call Center at 1-800-994-9662 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>