

Facts About Ovarian Cancer

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What You Should Know

- Cancer screening tests are used to detect cancers in people who are not having symptoms. Currently there is no routine screening test available to detect ovarian cancer.¹
- For women who are at high risk of ovarian cancer or for those who have persistent, unexplained symptoms, a combination of a thorough pelvic exam, transvaginal ultrasound, and a blood test for the tumor marker CA125 can be offered.¹
- A woman's risk of getting invasive ovarian cancer during her lifetime is about 1 in 71. Her lifetime chance of dying from invasive ovarian cancer is about 1 in 95.¹
- The sign and symptoms of ovarian cancer include bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly, and urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency). If there is reason to suspect ovarian cancer, one should meet with a gynecologic oncologist, a doctor who has special training in treating women with ovarian cancer.

Risk Factors

- Factors that **increase** a woman's risk for developing ovarian cancer include older age, family history of ovarian or breast cancer, personal history of breast cancer, not having children, being overweight, use of estrogen alone as post-menopausal hormone therapy, use of talcum powder on the genital area, and smoking and alcohol use.¹
- Women who have inherited certain altered (mutated) genes (BRCA1, BRCA2) or those with nonpolyposis colon cancer

(HNPCC) genes have higher risk of developing ovarian cancer.

- Factors that **reduce** a woman's risk for developing ovarian cancer include birth control pills, having multiple children and breast-feeding, having a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) or tubal ligation (female sterilization), and having both ovaries removed.¹

Incidence and Mortality

- During 2005, 696 women in Michigan were newly diagnosed with ovarian cancer.²
- The American Cancer Society estimated that in the United States, 21,650 women were diagnosed and 15,520 women died of ovarian cancer in 2008.
- The incidence of ovarian cancer in Michigan has declined from 17.0 per 100,000 women in 1990 to 12.2 per 100,000 women in 2005.² These rates are similar to the national rates.⁴
- Ovarian cancer caused 534 deaths among Michigan women in 2006.³
- Mortality rates associated with ovarian cancer have slightly decreased in Michigan from 9.9 deaths per 100,000 women in 1991 to 9.1 deaths per 100,000 women in 2006.³ These rates are similar to the national rates.⁴
- Michigan's ovarian cancer mortality rate ranks 20th in the nation, with 31 states having lower mortality rates.⁴

References:

1. American Cancer Society.
2. MDCH Vital Records & Health Data Development Section, 1985-2005 Michigan Cancer Incidence File
3. MDCH Vital Records & Health Data Development Section, 1985-2006 Michigan Resident Death Files
4. SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2005 National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD

