


A ROADMAP FOR OVARIAN CANCER

Know the Signs and Symptoms



Work with a Gynecologic Oncologist

Thinking you may have ovarian cancer and receiving a diagnosis is frightening. But you are not alone! Your team of providers will be there to support you.

 Work with your primary care provider and obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) to undergo the appropriate tests to confirm if your signs and symptoms indicate ovarian cancer.

 Seek a referral to a gynecologic oncologist for treatment.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Unlike other types of cancer (like breast cancer), screening for ovarian cancer is not available. In early stages there may not be many signs or symptoms. This means that it is often found at a later stage, when treatment may be less effective.

- If you have signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer contact and discuss these with your primary care provider or OB/GYN. Symptoms may include:

Bloating

Problems eating or feeling full quickly

Urinary urgency (feeling like you must go) or frequency (having to go often), or retention (can't go)

Fatigue

Vaginal bleeding (especially postmenopause) or discharge from the vagina not normal for you

Pressure or pain in the pelvic or abdominal area

Back pain

- These signs and symptoms may indicate different health issues which may not be ovarian cancer. This is sometimes why ovarian cancer is not diagnosed right away, and it is important to talk with your health care providers.

- There are tests that can be performed to confirm if you have ovarian cancer.

When ovarian cancer is suspected or has been diagnosed you should ask for a referral to a gynecologic oncologist.



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GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGIST: AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE TEAM

- A gynecologic oncologist is a doctor who is specially trained in treating cancers of the female reproductive system with both surgery and chemotherapy.
- Treatment by a gynecologic oncologist helps ensure that you get the appropriate kind of surgery for your cancer.
- Treatment by a gynecologic oncologist has also been shown to help patients with ovarian cancer live longer.



GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGIST ROLE DURING TREATMENT

According to experts at the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, the specialized training that gynecologic oncologists receive means that they should be involved in:

- Determining if the cancer has spread from the ovaries and if it has, how far it has spread
- Performing the surgery to remove ovarian cancer
- Determining if chemotherapy should be given before surgery to shrink the tumor
- Prescribing follow-up chemotherapy



HOW TO FIND A GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGIST NEAR YOU

- Talk with your primary care provider or OB/GYN about seeking a referral to a gynecologist oncologist.
- Contact the Michigan Ovarian Cancer Patient Navigation line @ [844-446-8727](tel:844-446-8727) for information on gynecologic oncologists in your area, and additional ovarian cancer resources.

References: https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/ovarian/pdf/ovarian_facts.pdf;
https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/knowledge/pdf/cdc_gyn_comprehensive_brochure.pdf;
<https://www.nccn.org/patients/guidelines/content/PDF/ovarian-patient.pdf>;
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/CRC/PDF/Public/8776.00.pdf>

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