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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2010

Reprinted by:
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: OVARIAN CANCER

Each year an estimated 20,000 women in the United States get ovarian cancer. It is the 8th most common cancer of women. Ovarian cancer is the 5th leading cause of cancer death in the United States.

What is ovarian cancer?

Cancer is a disease where cells grow out of control. The cancer is named for the location where it starts, even if later it spreads to other body parts. If the cancer starts in the ovaries it is called ovarian cancer. The ovaries are in the pelvis of a woman where they make female hormones and produce eggs.

Who gets ovarian cancer?

Any woman can get ovarian cancer – although some women may be at higher risk.

- Women who have a family history of breast or ovarian cancer
- Women with a personal history of cancer
- Women over the age of 55
- Women who were never pregnant
- Women who are having menopausal hormone replacement therapy

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**September
is Ovarian Cancer
Awareness Month**

***Talk to your doctor or other health care professional
about how you might lower your risk of cancer.***

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Just because you may have one or more of these risk factors **does not** mean that you will have ovarian cancer. It does mean that you should talk to your doctor or healthcare professional about your risk for ovarian cancer.

Avoiding cancer risk factors such as smoking, being overweight, and lack of exercise may help prevent certain cancers. Increasing protective factors such as quitting smoking, eating a healthy diet, and exercising may also help prevent some cancers. Talk to your doctor or other health care professional about how you might lower your risk of cancer.

You are the best judge when it comes to your body. It is important to notice any changes that may be occurring. Some signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer may be:

- Bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
- Difficulty eating or feeling full very quickly
- A change in your bathroom habits, like having to urinate often and quickly

Other symptoms may include:

- Nausea, indigestion or gas
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Extreme fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Backaches

If any of these symptoms last for more than 2 or 3 weeks then you should talk to you health-care provider. Again, you know your body best!

The University of Kentucky Ovarian Cancer Screening Program provides FREE screenings to qualified women. To get more information you can call: 1 (800) 766-8279.

You can also call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service to find out more about ovarian cancer at 1-800-4-CANCER.



SOURCES:

- National Cancer Institute: <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/ovarian>
- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/ovarian/index.htm>
- Ovarian cancer Awareness: <http://www.ovariancancerawareness.org>
- Kentucky Cancer Registry: <http://www.kcr.uky.edu/>

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