

Make Five Minutes Matter

A guide through some facts and figures of gynecologic cancers

Every five minutes, someone's life changes with a gynecologic cancer diagnosis^{1,2}. Whether you have already been diagnosed or think you may be experiencing symptoms of a gynecologic cancer, it can be helpful to familiarize yourself with the facts and talk to your doctor about any questions you may have.

Have you heard of the five main types of gynecologic cancer?

- 1 Uterine*
 - 2 Ovarian*
 - 3 Cervical
 - 4 Vaginal
 - 5 Vulvar
- + Fallopian Tube Cancer³ (very rare)

*The two most common types are uterine⁴ (especially endometrial)⁵ and ovarian⁶.

What symptoms might warrant a conversation with your doctor?

- 1 Unusual vaginal bleeding or discharge⁷
- 2 Feeling full too quickly, bloating, loss of appetite, or constipation⁶
- 3 Pain in the abdomen or back⁶
- 4 More frequent or urgent urination⁶
- 5 Pressure in the pelvis or itching, burning, tenderness, or color change of the vulva⁶

Not all symptoms are the same for everyone. If you are experiencing these (or other unexplained symptoms) it's important you speak with your doctor.

Who is at risk for gynecologic cancer?

While anyone with female reproductive organs is at risk of developing gynecologic cancers, certain factors can increase your risk. For example:

- 1 Family history of gynecologic or other cancers⁸
- 2 Advanced age⁹
- 3 HPV (human papilloma virus) infections that do not go away⁷
- 4 Black women are at greater risk of endometrial cancer¹⁰
- 5 White women are at greater risk of ovarian cancer¹¹

Is there a way to prevent gynecologic cancer?

There is no known way to prevent gynecologic cancer entirely, but there are steps you can take to reduce your chances or catch it early.

- 1 Pay attention to your body and know what is normal for you⁵
- 2 Make healthy lifestyle choices⁵
- 3 Know your family health history⁵
- 4 Talk to your doctor about if the HPV vaccine is right for you⁵
- 5 Ask your doctor about recommended screenings¹²

What are some questions should you ask your doctor after a gynecologic cancer diagnosis?

- 1 What are my treatment options?
- 2 Are there genetic or biomarker tests that may determine the best treatment for me?
- 3 Are there any clinical trials I might be eligible for?
- 4 Are there any support groups or resources I can turn to for information or peer-to-peer support?
- 5 What else can I do to take care of myself?



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1 Learn The Facts. Join the Movement. Foundation for Women's Cancer. <https://foundationforwomenscancer.org/get-involved/move-the-message/#:-:text=Every%20five%20minutes%2C%20a%20woman,nearly%2015%2C000%20Americans%20each%20year>. Accessed July 2024.

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