

# Every woman needs to know the symptoms of OVARIAN CANCER.

Source: [www.ovariancancer.net.au](http://www.ovariancancer.net.au)

OVARIAN CANCER is a disease where some of the cells in one or both ovaries start to grow abnormally and become tumors which develop into cancer. It can be difficult to diagnose because its symptoms are ones that many women will have from time to time, and they are often symptoms of less serious and more common health problems.

The four most commonly reported symptoms of ovarian cancer include:

- Abdominal or pelvic pain.
- Increased abdominal size or persistent abdominal bloating
- Needing to urinate often or urgently.
- Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly.

Other symptoms to be aware of:

- Changes in your bowel habits
- Unexplained weight gain or weight loss.
- Bleeding in between periods or after menopause.
- Lower Back pain.
- Indigestion or nausea.
- Excessive fatigue.
- Pain during or after sexual intercourse

The exact cause of most cases is unknown, but factors that may increase risk include; increasing age, hereditary factors, conditions such as endometriosis, obesity, and, even smoking.

## DIAGNOSING OVARIAN CANCER

It is mainly diagnosed in women over the age of 50, however there are cases diagnosed in younger women too. If your doctor suspects ovarian cancer, there are a number of tests to help decide whether your symptoms are due to ovarian cancer or other causes. Initial examinations and tests will usually include:

- Physical examination.
- Blood tests.
- Ultrasound.
- Other imaging tests. These may include chest or abdominal x-rays or ultrasounds, a CT scan or MRI of the abdominal area.
- **A Cervical Smear test WILL NOT detect Ovarian Cancer**

***Be aware – but don't make yourself sick with worry. You know your body better than anyone else, so always listen to what your body is saying and trust your instincts.***

***It is important to remember that most women with these symptoms will not have ovarian cancer. See your GP who will first rule out more common causes of these symptoms.***