

Ovarian Cancer

Epithelial Ovarian Cancer



This NCCN QUICK GUIDE™ sheet summarizes key points from the complete [NCCN Guidelines for Patients®: Ovarian Cancer](#). These guidelines explain which tests and treatments are recommended by experts in cancer. To view and download the guidelines, visit NCCN.org/patients or, to order printed copies, visit Amazon.com

NCCN Guidelines
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Page Number

What is ovarian cancer?



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ovarian cancer is a disease in which cells in the ovary grow out of control and form a mass called a tumor. Cancer cells can separate from the original tumor and spread to form tumors in other parts of the body. This is called metastasis. ■ There is more than one type of ovarian cancer. Epithelial ovarian cancer is the most common type and is the focus of this patient guide. 	8
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What are the symptoms of ovarian cancer?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Your doctor may suspect ovarian cancer if you have certain symptoms that are new and frequent. Such symptoms include feeling bloated, indigestion, pain in your pelvis or belly, trouble eating or feeling full fast, and needing to urinate often or urgently. 	10
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What are some tests I can expect before treatment?

Genetic counseling and testing	NCCN experts recommend genetic counseling for all women diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Genetic counseling is a discussion with a health expert, typically a genetic counselor, about the risk for a disease caused by changes in genes. Genetic counseling may help you decide whether to be tested for hereditary ovarian cancer.	13
Imaging tests	Different types of imaging tests are used to look for ovarian cancer, plan treatment, and check treatment results. Ultrasound is often the first test used to look for ovarian cancer.	14
Tumor marker testing	CA-125 is the most commonly used tumor marker test for ovarian cancer. This test alone cannot diagnose ovarian cancer, but high levels of this protein in the blood may be a sign of ovarian cancer.	17



What are the main treatment options for ovarian cancer?

Surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Surgery is used as the first and main treatment for most ovarian cancers. ■ NCCN experts recommend that ovarian cancer surgery be performed by a gynecologic oncologist. A gynecologic oncologist is a surgeon who is an expert in cancers that start in a woman's reproductive organs. ■ Surgical treatment often involves removing both ovaries, both fallopian tubes, and the uterus. 	29
Chemotherapy	Most women with ovarian cancer receive chemotherapy after surgery. In certain cases, chemotherapy may be given to shrink the cancer before surgery.	32
Targeted therapy	Targeted therapy is treatment with drugs that target a specific or unique feature of cancer cells. These drugs stop the action of molecules that help cancer cells grow. Targeted therapy is less likely to harm normal cells than chemotherapy.	33
Immunotherapy	Immunotherapy is a newer type of cancer treatment that increases the activity of your immune system. By doing so, it improves your body's ability to find and destroy cancer cells.	34
Hormone therapy	Hormone therapy is treatment that stops the body from making certain hormones or stops the action of the hormones. It may be used for ovarian cancer that has come back after other treatments.	34

How do I decide between my treatment options?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't be shy about asking your doctors questions. They are there to help. ■ Get a second opinion. Even doctors get second opinions. ■ Support groups can be helpful. You can learn a lot from others with ovarian cancer. ■ Compare the benefits and risks of each treatment option. 	59
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