

10 top tips

Women's guide

This set of top tips has been developed to help you talk to your GP about symptoms of ovarian cancer.

Worried about the symptoms of ovarian cancer? We help you talk to your GP.

- 1** Symptoms include:
- persistent bloating
 - feeling full quickly and/or loss of appetite
 - pelvic or abdominal pain (that's your tummy and below)
 - urinary symptoms (needing to wee more urgently or more often than usual)

You should go to your GP if you have any of these symptoms and they are new for you, don't go away or happen more than 12 times a month.

- 2** There can also be other symptoms:
- changes in bowel habit (eg diarrhoea or constipation)
 - extreme fatigue (feeling very tired)
 - unexplained weight loss

Act early if you feel something is wrong. You know your body best.

- 3** Make an appointment with your GP. Tell your surgery you are worried about cancer and need to be seen as soon as possible.

- 4** Keep a symptoms diary to track your symptoms. This can be very useful not only for you but also for your GP. You can download Target Ovarian Cancer's Symptoms Diary at targetovariancancer.org.uk/symptomsdiary or order it by calling **020 7923 5475**.

- 5** You can book a double appointment with your GP if you need time to discuss more than one concern. You may also be able to book a telephone appointment with a GP for advice if it is difficult to get to the surgery in person.

- 6** Think about whether anyone in your family has had ovarian or breast cancer, **on either your mother's or father's side**. It might be helpful to ask relatives about this. If you do have a family history of ovarian and/or breast cancer, make sure you tell your GP.

- 7** Give your GP as much information as possible. Write down anything you would like to discuss with your GP or any specific concerns you have and take this with you to your appointment. If you are worried you might have ovarian cancer, tell your GP; they will be glad you've shared your concerns.

- 8** Cervical screening tests – known as smear tests – do **NOT** detect ovarian cancer. All new symptoms should be discussed with your GP.

- 9** Keep going back to your GP if your symptoms don't improve even if any tests and investigations are negative. You can always take a friend or family member to support you at your follow-up appointments.

- 10** For more information on symptoms and the tests your GP should do, or if you are worried about ovarian cancer, visit targetovariancancer.org.uk/symptoms or call Target Ovarian Cancer's Support Line on **020 7923 5475**.

@ info@targetovariancancer.org.uk

targetovariancancer.org.uk

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