

Ovarian Cancer

1 in 78 women get diagnosed with ovarian cancer. There is no effective screening programme for early detection, and the symptoms are usually very vague, so this form of cancer is often diagnosed at an advanced stage only.

Here is what every woman should now about ovarian cancer¹:

- The following symptoms can indicate ovarian cancer. They are not very specific and can be caused by other diseases.
 - Stomach ache
 - Digestion problems like constipation, flatulence, vomiting, weight loss
 - Visible increase in the abdominal girth
 - Shortness of breath
 - Urination problems or an unusual urge to urinate
 - Rarely some forms of thrombosis
- An initial diagnosis is made up of a vaginal sonography, a blood test and a CAT scan. A suspicion can arise in a vaginal sonography, so seeing your gynaecologist regularly is the best option to detect it early. However, it does not mean you are on the safe side. Ovarian cancer can grow very fast and may not be detected in a gynaecological examination.
- Ovarian cancer is often hereditary. If you have several cases of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, but also prostate cancer and bowel cancer in your family, you might be at a higher risk, and you should contact your gynaecologist. Genetic defects can be diagnosed with blood test. Angelina Jolie is a well-known example of such a genetic mutation.
- The treatment of ovarian cancer usually consists of an operation and chemotherapy. New forms of treatment are being developed constantly, for example immune therapies. The survival rate has increased significantly in the past few years. The quality of the operation is vital. **Such complex surgery should only be done by experts in specialized medical centres, where they conduct such operations frequently.** If you, or someone close to you, are diagnosed with ovarian cancer, find a specialist and competent medical centre in your country.



The teal ribbon is the symbol of ovarian cancer

¹ Source of information: brochure "Gynäkologische Krebserkrankungen" by the Austrian cancer charity "Österreichische Krebshilfe", put together by Dr. Alexander Reinhaller, specialist on ovarian cancer at the Vienna general hospital AKH.

Why is the dance called "Between yews and willows"?

The yew tree, which we all know is poisonous, specifically its bark, provides us with a chemotherapeutic agent for the treatment of ovarian cancer called Paclitaxel.

The willow tree is a symbol of hope, healing, the ability to let go of pain and suffering and the idea of standing tall.

