

OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



In February, Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is held in Australia to educate, advocate and increase awareness regarding ovarian cancer.

Annually in Australia approximately 1,532 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Unfortunately, in most cases the cancer is diagnosed at an advanced stage where it is difficult to treat and has poor prognosis. The average age of diagnosis is 64 but there are cases which were diagnosed in younger women.

Ovarian cancer is a term to describe a Malignant tumour arising from one or both ovaries.

What women can do?

The most important thing is to look after your body and be aware of symptoms of the disease. Unfortunately, until now there is no screening test for ovarian cancer.

*A Cervical Cancer Screening Test does not detect ovarian cancer - it is designed to screen for cervical cancer. Research is underway to try and develop better screening tests to detect ovarian cancer at earlier stages and improve patient outcomes.

According to health surveys only 31% of Australians knew that ovarian cancer has the worst survival rate of any female cancer in Australia. Considering this, it is very important to spread evidence-based information amongst our female population so that every Australian woman is aware of this aggressive disease and seeks timely treatment.

Considering late diagnosis and poor survival rate it is very important that women know the early signs and symptoms related to ovarian cancer and are aware of any risk factors that can increase their chance of developing ovarian cancer.

The symptoms of ovarian cancer are usually vague and like other common conditions.


Common symptoms-

- Abdominal bloating or increased abdominal size
- Abdominal or pelvic pain
- Appetite loss, feeling full quickly or indigestion.
- Urinary changes such as frequency or urgency
- Changes in bowel habits, such as constipation
- Unexplained weight loss or weight gain
- Unexplained fatigue

If you are concerned about your family history of breast or ovarian cancer or persistent symptoms you should speak to your doctor.

It is indeed of utmost importance to advocate on behalf of patients affected by ovarian cancer for more research funding, better laws and policies, improved and easy access to affordable treatment in order to improve the health outcome in this group.

It is very important to listen to women who are affected with ovarian cancer by sharing their journeys, experiences with as many people as possible. To bring all these changes we need to raise funds for the noble cause.



What is Teal Ribbon?

Australia is observing Ovarian Cancer Month in February this year. We are requesting everyone in our community to wear a Teal Ribbon throughout the month to support the noble cause.

Wearing your Teal Ribbon every day will start conversations that change lives, it will increase awareness of the disease and it will help raise funds to support people affected by ovarian cancer.

You can easily buy a ribbon thru [Terry White Chemmart](#) or thru [Ovarian Cancer Australia website](#) and help the organisers to turn



February teal for Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.



Important Links:

- **The annual Giving Day will take place on Thursday 23 February. Every dollar you donate will be matched to ensure that the organisation continues running their vital support programs**
- [Support resources and factsheets](#)
- [Support groups](#)
- [Support for younger women](#)
- [Get your own ovarian cancer nurse](#)
- [Male Partners Program](#)
- [Family and friends booklet](#)
- [Facebook Support Group](#)
- For further information and support contact one of our nurses on the [Ovarian Cancer Australia Helpline](#), 1300 660 334.

About the Author:

Dr. Samina Ahmed MBBS, FCPS, FRANZCOG, Masters in Rep Med

Samina delivers her services in both Obstetrics and Gynaecology with particular interest in Fertility and Reproductive Medicine.

Samina has specialty appointments at Geelong University Hospital, Joan Kirner Women's & Children, and Sunshine Private Hospital as a Specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist.

She also holds a Fertility Sub Specialist appointment at Joan Kirner Western health and in her role she assists couples to produce an offspring thru assisted reproductive techniques (ART/IVF).

In addition to that Samina holds senior academic appointments at Deakin University Geelong and University of Melbourne. She is also Supervisor at Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. In this role she regularly teaches and assess medical students and Trainees.

She can speak English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi.

She is also an experienced highly trained gynaecologist who diagnoses and treats a wide range of gynaecological conditions. She provides a broad range gynaecological services in a friendly and comprehensively informative manner. She is experienced in managing menstrual abnormalities, endometriosis and pelvic pain, fibroids, ovarian cysts, pelvic organ prolapse with urinary incontinence, abnormal Cervical Cancer Screening Results and Colposcopy.

Samina has expertise in a wide range of surgical procedures that may be required for your care. These procedures may include: Hysterectomy, Hysteroscopy, MIRENA, Contraception (IUD/Sterilisation), Suction D&C, Endometrial Ablation etc. All treatment options, including non-surgical methods, will be discussed with you following a thorough assessment of your condition, your needs and your aims of treatment.

As a medical professional Samina's philosophy and motive is to give the maximum possible care with competence and passion.

