

# Do you know the symptoms of ovarian cancer?



Bloating



Stomach pain



Weeing more



Struggling to eat



talking 

ovaries

# What are the symptoms of ovarian cancer?

## Ovarian cancer has four main symptoms:

- Persistent bloating
- Persistent stomach pain
- Needing to wee more frequently or urgently
- Difficulty eating or feeling full more quickly

Other symptoms could include indigestion, back pain, extreme tiredness for no obvious reason, a change in bowel habits (going more often than usual or less frequently), post-menopausal vaginal bleeding, and unexplained weight loss.

These are symptoms of lots of different conditions, and can often be confused with things such as irritable bowel syndrome, an ovarian cyst, indigestion or a urine or kidney infection. However, symptoms are more likely to be a possible sign of ovarian cancer if they are persistent, frequent (occurring more than 12 times a month) severe or out of the ordinary.

Ovarian cancer is not a common disease. Even if you are experiencing any of the above symptoms it's unlikely that you have it. However it is vital that you still take action and visit your GP so that they can rule it out.

## I have symptoms, what now?

If you notice any of these symptoms or just feel something isn't right with your body, you should make an appointment to see your GP. Explain what symptoms you are experiencing and how severe/frequent they are. To make this easier you can use our symptoms diary to track them and take this with you. Download from [ovarian.org.uk/symptomsdiary](http://ovarian.org.uk/symptomsdiary) or call 020 7380 1744 to request a copy in the post.



## What will happen at my appointment?

### **Your GP may do some of the following things:**

- Ask more questions about your symptoms
- Ask questions about your family history of ovarian and other cancers to explore the possibility of a genetic link
- Enquire about your heritage. People from backgrounds including Ashkenazi Jewish, Polish, Icelandic and Pakistani may be at greater risk of carrying a genetic fault that increases ovarian cancer risk
- Conduct an external abdominal examination to feel for abnormal lumps
- Conduct an internal vaginal examination

### **If your GP is concerned you might have ovarian cancer they will refer for further investigations, including:**

- CA125 blood test
- Pelvic ultrasound scan
- Transvaginal ultrasound scan

None of these tests can say conclusively that you have ovarian cancer, so if the results suggest that this could be the case you will be referred to a gynaecologist who will carry out more investigations in order to reach a diagnosis.

## DID YOU KNOW...

- Ovarian cancer is the sixth most common cancer in women in the UK
- Around 7,500 women are diagnosed with the disease each year in the UK
- The cervical smear does NOT detect ovarian cancer
- There is currently no national screening programme for the disease
- It's vital to know the symptoms of ovarian cancer. Get to know your own body and act as soon as you notice something which is not right




**We are the UK's ovarian cancer research charity and our mission is to fund research that saves lives.**

**But we can't do it alone. Overcoming ovarian cancer is about working together. It's about joining forces and becoming greater than the sum of our parts.**

**Join us. Fight with us. Act now.**

### CONTACT US

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