

In Advanced Ovarian Cancer, Time is Everything

Give Her Time 

DISCUSSION GUIDE

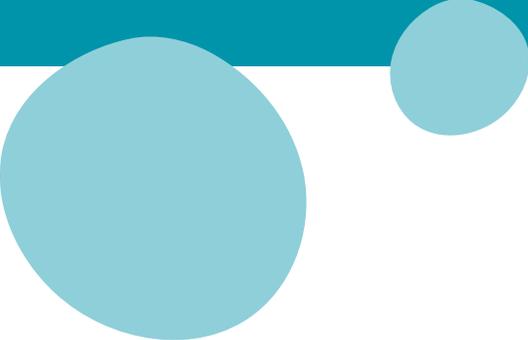
Helping People Affected by Advanced Ovarian Cancer
with Important Conversations and Decision-Making

This guide is for people diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer, or who support someone affected

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Progress in the treatment and care of people with advanced ovarian cancer in recent years means it is now more important than ever that those living with a diagnosis are given the time they need to make informed decisions - that can be life-changing.^{1,2}

We know that having important conversations around treatment, care and living day-to-day can be difficult. So, to help, we have produced a set of discussion points within this Guide.

Our hope is that people living with advanced ovarian cancer and those who support them will feel better able to have these all-important conversations with their loved ones and healthcare professionals – enabling those affected to have the time they need to choose what matters most to them, be themselves, and to have their voices heard.

Time to choose

Take the time to discuss different treatment options

People with advanced ovarian cancer need to know all the available options around their care and treatment. It is essential for them to be able to ask the right questions and get the right support when they make decisions about their lives.

What treatment options might be available to the person diagnosed?

An increasingly broad range of treatments can now be available to people with advanced ovarian cancer.¹ Whether they are eligible for different treatments will depend on a number of factors, including their BRCA status, the stage of their cancer, and whether they have advanced or recurrent disease.

For those diagnosed, their loved ones, and healthcare professionals, taking the time to discuss different treatment options and to understand why a person may or may not be eligible for various treatments can be very important.

For information about standard and new treatments for ovarian cancer, about clinical trials, and about asking for a second medical opinion, you can visit Ovacom and Ovarian Cancer Action's websites, or call the Ovacom support line (see end of document for links to information and the support line details).

What are the aims of the treatment being offered and how might this affect day-to-day life?

When deciding whether a treatment option is the right one, it is important to think about its possible benefits and disadvantages.

Treatment that aims to manage the disease needs to be clearly understood, along with the side effects it may cause. This can help with decision making.

These will be important conversations between those diagnosed and their medical team. They may also be helpful for loved ones so that they can understand and support decision making about advanced ovarian cancer treatment.

It can be helpful to read about the experiences of others in similar circumstances. You can read their stories on both Ovacom and Ovarian Cancer Action's websites.

Who can provide support if those diagnosed have questions about treatment options?

If you have been diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer and have questions about your treatment options, please don't hesitate to contact your medical team.

It can be helpful to prepare some questions you might want to ask them; a family member or friend could help you to think about these, or you could contact Ovacom to talk through your concerns and priorities.

Prepare some questions you might want to ask

Time to be themselves

Living with advanced ovarian cancer is an individual experience and every person affected will have different priorities. What is important is the person is given the time they need to express what matters most to them.

What matters most right now to the person diagnosed?

Every person will react differently to their diagnosis of advanced ovarian cancer. They should never feel pressure to react in a certain way. It is important for family, friends or healthcare professionals not to assume how the person diagnosed might be feeling and what they might want.

Every person will react differently to their diagnosis

How does the person diagnosed want to spend their time?

Every person is unique, so when given a life-changing diagnosis, every person will have different priorities in terms of how they want to spend their time.

For some people, the most important thing might be:

- Reaching a milestone, like a birthday, a graduation, or the arrival of a new family member.
- Feeling well enough to travel and try new activities.
- Spending quality time with loved ones.
- Being able to live as normal a life as they can day-to-day.

Having this conversation about time and what that means to the person diagnosed can make a great difference and help to frame other conversations around treatment options and care.

Does the person diagnosed feel the same about their diagnosis and how they want to spend their time, as they did last week, last month or last year? If not, what has changed?

Answers to the two questions above can change over time, and that's OK. Circumstances may have changed, or the disease may have progressed. If you are caring for someone diagnosed, either as a loved one or healthcare professional, it can be important to have these conversations more than once.

It can be important to have these conversations more than once

Time to be heard

The time a person diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer spends with their healthcare team is important in making sure they get the best possible care. Exploring options together and making time to discuss their personal priorities will inform their treatment moving forward. It is also important conversations continue after the initial diagnosis, as circumstances and personal preferences can change significantly over time.

How has treatment impacted the life of the person diagnosed / how do they think it will affect them? Is there anything that could be done to reduce some side effects?

The physical and emotional effects of treatment will impact everyone differently. It can be helpful to have an open conversation about side effects and to make clear that they are important. If the physical side effects of treatment are affecting the person diagnosed, then feeling confident to speak to a healthcare professional about these can make a real difference. Your medical team can best advise on how side effects can be managed.

If the effects are on the person's social life, their work, or their emotional wellbeing, having this conversation can determine which support services or aids could be available.

Have an open conversation about side effects

How much support does the person diagnosed have around them? What other forms of support would they find helpful?

Understanding how each person is supported can help with signposting them towards the right services, at the right time.

Every person's information and support needs will be different, so taking the time to discuss the various forms of support available, both to those diagnosed and their loved ones, can have a positive impact on their experience.

They may be interested in joining a support group, speaking to others online, having a one-to-one support call, or accessing resources that will help them manage the effects of the disease.

Every person's information and support needs will be different

Support and information to help you have these conversations can be found here:

What happens when you are diagnosed

Talking to your family and friends

Preparing for remote appointments

Getting a second opinion

Targeted therapies

All about clinical trials

Secondary surgery for recurrent ovarian cancer

Getting the support you need

Living with ovarian cancer

Ovarian cancer support groups for those diagnosed and family members

meet others, share advice and experiences

Patient Hub

Ovarian cancer treatments

Treating ovarian cancer

Clinical trials

Palliative care

Caring for your emotional health after cancer

Support and info glossary

Patient webinars

All of the above resources are owned by Ovacome and Ovarian Cancer Action, and can be found on their respective websites.

The logo features the text "Give Her Time" in a white, handwritten-style font, with a teal ribbon symbol to the right. The text and ribbon are centered within a large, light teal circle. Two smaller, solid teal circles are positioned above and to the left of the main circle.

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Ovacome, Ovarian Cancer Action and GSK have come together to create Give Her Time – a campaign focused on empowering those living with advanced ovarian cancer to have the time to choose, to be understood and to be heard.

References

1. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Ovarian cancer overview. <https://bit.ly/3wrJmgc> Last accessed: May 2021
2. Kurnit KC, et al. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2021 Jan; 137 (1): 108 – 121

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