

# Mom's Moment: 5 Facts About Ovarian Cancer

Written by NadineBubeck

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Growing up, I was invincible. Now that I'm older—and especially a mom—I've realized life has a beautiful beginning, middle, and inevitable end, and it is my job as a mother to take care of myself and last as long as I can for my children.

I've become extremely connected to an Arizona-based platform called [Colleen's Dream](#). This amazing organization is spearheaded by a band of sisters who lost their mother to ovarian cancer. Day in and day out, they are determined to spread awareness and raise money to fund legitimate ovarian cancer research. It truly is an amazing organization.

I really hadn't known much about ovarian cancer, and have since realized that's the case with many women. In fact, many of us mistake it for cervical cancer and think it can be detected from an annual pap smear...however, that is not the case.

May 8th is [World Ovarian Cancer Day](#), so I thought it appropriate to share five facts every woman needs to know about what's known as the silent killer. All this information should be shared with your wives, daughters, mothers, and girlfriends- really anyone who has ovaries. An enormous thank you to Colleen's Dream for providing the following insight.

## Fact 1: All women are at risk for ovarian cancer.

Every year, nearly a quarter of a million women throughout the world are diagnosed with ovarian cancer and the disease is responsible for approximately 140,000 deaths. Ovarian cancer can develop at any age from infancy through adulthood; it does not discriminate against age or race. We should all be aware of symptoms, risk factors and your family history on both your father's and mother's side of the family.

## Fact 2: Ovarian cancer has several key risk factors.

Women should be aware of the following:

- Women with a family history of ovarian cancer may be at higher risk.
- Women who have never been pregnant and women who have uninterrupted ovulation due to infertility treatments seem to be at higher risk.
- Early onset of your period, or having a late menopause, seems to increase risk.
- Using talcum powder in the genital area may increase risk.
- Smoking is a risk factor for a type of ovarian cancer known as mucinous ovarian cancer.

## Fact 3: Symptoms for ovarian cancer are vague and ambiguous.

Ovarian cancer is considered the "Silent Killer" because the symptoms typically do not arise or are not recognized until the cancer has spread. To complicate matters further, the symptoms are vague and ambiguous and easily dismissed until they become alarming. This provides the cancer more time to grow and spread, ultimately putting women's lives at greater risk. Self advocacy can save time and potentially lead to faster diagnosis and treatment. If you or anyone you know experiences the following symptoms increasingly and persistently for two weeks or more, see your doctor:

- Increased abdominal size/persistent bloating (not bloating that comes and goes)
- Difficulty eating/feeling full quickly
- Abdominal or pelvic pain
- Needing to pass urine more urgently or more frequently

## Fact 4: There is no early detection test for ovarian cancer.

Women are not being screened for ovarian cancer at their annual exam. Currently, there is no reliable early detection test available to diagnose ovarian cancer. The pap smear does not detect it. Typically, it is not until ovarian cancer is already suspected that physicians utilize somewhat unreliable methods such as a CA-125 blood test and a transvaginal ultrasound or CT scan investigate the presence of ovarian masses. If tumors are detected, a biopsy is required to confirm the malignancy.

## Fact 5: Ovarian cancer is often diagnosed at a late stage.

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all gynecological cancers. One in four women die within the first year of diagnosis. Why? Without an early detection screening tool or easily recognizable symptoms, 85% of all women diagnosed with ovarian cancer have advanced disease when it is most difficult to treat and chances for survival have greatly diminished. When ovarian cancer is diagnosed in the earliest stage, there is a 92% survival rate. Colleen's Dream funds research with the primary goal of developing an accurate and accessible early detection screening tool so that one day women around the world are diagnosed with ovarian in early stages when their chances of survival are greatest.

[About Nadine](#)

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