

What are Gynecologic Cancers?

Gynecologic cancers are cancers of a woman's reproductive organs. These include cancer of the vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries.



Who is at Risk?

All women are at some risk; however, your risk of getting gynecologic cancer may depend on your age, family history and lifestyle.

	Ovarian Cancer	Uterine Cancer	Cervical Cancer	Other Cancers
F A C T S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •More women die of ovarian cancer than any other gynecologic cancer •Ovarian cancer is the second most common gynecologic cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Most uterine cancer begins in the lining of the uterus, the endometrium •Cancer of the uterus is the most common gynecologic cancer in women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cervical cancer is almost completely preventable with regular screening •Oral contraceptive use does not change your cervical cancer risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cancers of the vagina, vulva and fallopian tubes are rare. These cancers share some of the same risk factors.
R I S K S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •With age, especially after age 50 •With a family history of ovarian cancer •If you had breast cancer •In women who have not had children •Use of oral contraceptives reduces the risk of ovarian cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •With age, especially after age 50 •With obesity, diabetes or high blood pressure •With estrogen replacement therapy without supplemental progestin •In women who have not had children •In women who take tamoxifen •Healthy eating and exercise to maintain desirable weight reduces the risk of uterine cancer •Use of oral contraceptives reduces the risk of uterine cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In women who do not receive regular Pap tests and pelvic exams •If you or your sex partner have or have had multiple sex partners •If you have a history of genital warts or HPV (human papillomavirus) infection •If you smoke •Safer sex (condom use, low number of lifetime partners) •If your age of first intercourse is less than 18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Increasing age, especially after age 50 •With a history of gynecologic cancer, especially cervical cancer •Women with a history of genital warts or HPV (human papillomavirus) infection
W A R N I N G S	<p>Symptoms are often not obvious until the disease is advanced, and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Abdominal bloating, swelling and/or pain or a lump •Abnormal vaginal bleeding •Persistent digestive problems including stomach discomfort, gas, nausea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Abnormal vaginal bleeding, spotting or discharge •Abnormal bloating, pelvic fullness or cramping •Unexplained weight loss or gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Frequently there are no symptoms associated with cervical cancer •Abnormal bleeding, spotting or discharge from the vagina •Back or leg pain 	
D E T E C T I O N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Regular vaginal pelvic exams (usually yearly) •Special screening tests such as ultrasound and the CA125 blood test for women at high risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Regular vaginal pelvic exams (usually yearly) •Biopsy of the uterine lining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Regular vaginal pelvic exams and Pap tests (usually yearly) •A Pap test can detect abnormal cells before they become cancer •Biopsy of the cervix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Regular vaginal pelvic exams and Pap tests (usually yearly)

For more information about screening, diagnostic tests and treatment of gynecologic cancers, contact:

UCSD Student Health Service
858-534-5337
<http://studenthealth.ucsd.edu>

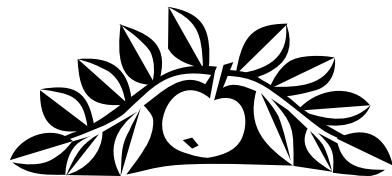
The Cancer Information Service
1-800-4-CANCER
<http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov/index>

The American Cancer Society
1-800-ACS-2345
www.cancer.org

Gynecologic Cancer Foundation
1-800-444-4441
www.sgo.org/gcf

National Ovarian Cancer Coalition
1-800-OVARIAN
www.ovarian.org/index.cfm

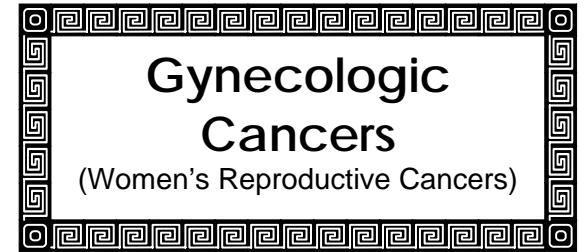
National Cervical Cancer Coalition
1-800-685-5531
www.nccc-online.org



UCSD Student Health Service

Make appts online at:
<http://studenthealth.ucsd.edu>
or call 534-8089
Call 534-5337 to speak with a nurse

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Gynecologic Cancers

(Women's Reproductive Cancers)

Early Detection is Your Best Protection

Visit your doctor or other medical care provider regularly for a vaginal pelvic examination, starting at age 18. Pap tests now begin at age 21, or after 3 years of having sex, whichever comes first.

During the exam, the doctor or nurse will check your breasts, reproductive organs and bladder to be sure that the size and shape seem normal, and will check for the presence of tumors, cysts, lumps or other warning signs.

This is a good time to talk to your doctor about any problem, symptom or changes you have noticed and to ask questions about your gynecologic health. It might help to take this pamphlet with you. Do not hesitate to ask any question you may have. It could save your life!



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