

31 Facts for 31 Days



- 1 Ovarian cancer is the most lethal gynaecological cancer.
- 2 There is no early detection test for ovarian cancer.
- 3 One Australian dies every 8 hours from ovarian cancer.
- 4 Worldwide, over 300,000 people are diagnosed with ovarian cancer every year.
- 5 The average 5-year survival rate for ovarian cancer is just 48%.
- 6 Historically, around 70% of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer will find they are already in the advanced stages of the disease.
- 7 When diagnosed in the later stages - which is most cases - the five-year survival rate for ovarian cancer patients is just 29%.
- 8 If caught in stages 1a or 1b, survival rates for ovarian cancer patients are as high as 92%. However, only 19% of cases are diagnosed early due to vagueness of symptoms and lack of an early detection test.
- 9 The only way to definitively diagnose ovarian cancer is through invasive surgery and biopsy.
- 10 More than 50% of the community incorrectly believe that a cervical screening test will detect ovarian cancer - it won't.
- 11 This year, around 1,720 Australians will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer.
- 12 The number of ovarian cancer diagnoses is increasing every year. It is projected that by 2030, 2,200 Australians will be diagnosed per year.
- 13 The symptoms of ovarian cancer are often vague, and may not even present significantly until the cancer has advanced. Symptoms can include persistent or sudden onset of: bloating and abdominal swelling, appetite loss or feeling full quickly, tiredness, unexplained changes in weight, change in frequency of urination and lower back pain.
- 14 Only 10-15% of ovarian cancer cases are linked to genetic factors such as the BRCA gene mutations.
- 15 The most common types of ovarian cancer are epithelial, germ cell and stromal cell.
- 16 Epithelial ovarian cancer accounts for 85-90% of all ovarian cancer cases.
- 17 BRCA germline mutations are associated with 10-15% of high grade serous ovarian cancers.

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- 18** It is estimated that about 44% of women who inherit a BRCA1 mutation and about 17% of women who inherit a BRCA2 mutation will develop ovarian cancer by the age of 80.
- 19** The use of contraceptive pills has been found to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer by 25-28% compared to those who have never used contraceptive pills.
- 20** An individual's risk of ovarian cancer decreases as a result of pregnancy and breastfeeding. Pregnancy can reduce the risk of ovarian cancer by approximately 30 per cent.
- 21** High grade serous carcinomas are the most common type of ovarian cancer, accounting for around 70% of all cases.
- 22** More than 80% of ovarian cancer patients experience a recurrence after initially having successful surgery and treatment.
- 23** Chemoresistance is responsible for treatment failure and mortality for more than 90% of patients with advanced stage ovarian cancer.
- 24** Ovarian cancer treatments have not changed much since 1992.
- 25** The average survival rate for ovarian cancer in 2022 (48%) is lower than the average survival rate for all cancers in 1975, when the modern cancer research era began.
- 26** Ovarian cancers can affect people of all ages. Epithelial ovarian cancers are most commonly diagnosed in those aged 65+, whereas ovarian Germ Cell Tumours are more commonly found in young adults or adolescents.
- 27** The Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (OCRF) is the largest non-government funder of ovarian cancer research in Australia.
- 28** 49% of early detection research in Australia has been funded by the OCRF, thanks to the generosity of community supporters.
- 29** Frocktober has raised over \$3.9 million for the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (OCRF) since it began in 2007.
- 30** Clinicians, researchers and those impacted by ovarian cancer consistently nominate early detection as the number one breakthrough they believe will save lives.
- 31** Over a decade, an early detection test could save the lives of 8,000 Australians and around 1.3 million lives globally.