

# 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 Each year, nearly a quarter of a million women around the world are diagnosed with ovarian cancer.
- 4 **In Australia alone, one woman dies every eight hours from ovarian cancer.**
- 5 Only 20-25% of women diagnosed at a late stage will survive more than five years.
- 6 If a woman is diagnosed at Stage 1 (while the cancer is localised) then her survival rates are over 90%
- 7 The OCRF receives no government funding and relies solely on the financial support of corporate Australia and the broader community.
- 8 **The OCRF strongly supports the development of a highly accurate, non invasive and inexpensive early detection test that should then form part of every woman's annual health check up, like Pap smears and mammograms.**
- 9 Each research grant application the OCRF receives is assessed by an expert Scientific Advisory Committee.
- 10 Proportionally, more women die from ovarian cancer than breast cancer, because it is usually diagnosed in its advanced stages.
- 11 6 out of 10 women will not survive an ovarian cancer diagnosis
- 12 Once the costs for maintaining our small office are absorbed, funds are distributed as scientific grants to ovarian cancer researchers in hospitals, universities and research institutes.
- 13 Although tests and scans can show abnormalities, they cannot provide a diagnosis of ovarian cancer. The only way to currently confirm a diagnosis is by taking a biopsy during surgery and looking at the cells under a microscope.
- 14 The causes of ovarian cancer are unknown, but risk factors include age, reproductive history, having endometriosis, and lifestyle and hormonal factors.
- 15 While cells in our body usually grow in a controlled and organised fashion, when they grow abnormally, they form a growth or tumour which can be benign or malignant. Benign tumours are not cancerous and do not spread. Ovarian cancer is a malignant tumour in one or both ovaries, which can continue to spread through the body if not treated.
- 16 Did you know that Frocktober started with eight women sitting around a table in a 24-hour diner in Geelong? Their first Frocktober event held in 2007 raised \$200.



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OVARIAN  
CANCER  
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- 17** Symptoms are often vague and the warning signs associated with the disease—discomfort or pain in the abdomen or pelvis; feeling swollen or bloated; appetite loss or feeling full quickly; tiredness, and unexplained changes in weight—rarely set off alarm bells. As a result, women or their doctors sometimes mistakenly attribute the symptoms to other gastrointestinal problems or common female complaints, and delay taking further steps.
- 18** Over 50% of the community incorrectly believes a Pap smear will diagnose ovarian cancer.
- 19** Each year, around 1,600 Australian women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer.
- 20** Ovarian cancer is the eighth most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australian females, but the most lethal gynaecological cancer.
- 21** Recent research suggests that many ovarian cancers start in the fallopian tubes. It should not be confused with cervical cancer which originates in the cervix.
- 22** About four out of five ovarian cancer patients are diagnosed with advanced disease that has spread throughout the abdominal cavity (American Cancer Society).
- 23** **90% (of women diagnosed in the advanced stages) suffer a recurrence within 2 years**
- 24** Since it began in 2007, Frocktober has raised over \$1.8 million dollars for the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation. On average, this is the equivalent of funding four research projects, each for three years.
- 25** Less than 2% of Australian Government research grants in the past two years have been dedicated to ovarian cancer.
- 26** Regardless of tissue and genetic diversity of people with ovarian cancer, the majority of patients are treated similarly—this is why the OCRF has a focus on personalised treatment.
- 27** The same ovarian cancer drugs have been used since 1992, and while there have been developments in ovarian cancer research, the same cannot be said for treatments. That is why the OCRF is investing funding into personalised treatments.
- 28** Nearly one in three Australians doesn't know the difference between ovarian cancer and cervical cancer.
- 29** More than 70% of Australians don't know or incorrectly believe that the Human Papilloma Virus Vaccine (HPV) protects against ovarian cancer.
- 30** **The most common types of ovarian cancer are epithelial (arising in nine out of 10 cases), germ cell and stromal cell.**
- 31** About 15–20% of women with ovarian cancer are found to have a fault in one of the BRCA genes or other similar genes.



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