

How common is ovarian cancer?

- Ovarian cancer is the fifth most common cancer in females in the UK and the second most common gynaecological cancer after uterus.
- There were over 6,500 new cases of ovarian cancer diagnosed in 2008 in the UK, that is around 126 women every week
- Ovarian cancer is more common in women who have been through the menopause: more than 8 in 10 new cases are diagnosed in women aged over 50 years.
- Since the mid 1970s, the incidence of ovarian cancer in women aged 65 and over has increased by more than 50%.
- In 2008 around 45,000 women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer in Europe (EU-27).
- Worldwide, around 225,000 women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2008.

How many women survive ovarian cancer?

- Survival from ovarian cancer has almost doubled over the last 30 years. Over 1,000 more women per year in England and Wales are now surviving ovarian cancer for at least 5 years due to improved survival rates.
- Latest rates show that around 40% of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer survive the disease for at least five years.
- Ovarian cancer survival rates are higher the earlier the cancer is diagnosed. Women with early stage ovarian cancer have survival rates in excess of 70%.
- Around a third of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are now likely to survive their disease for at least ten years.
- Ovarian cancer survival rates are highest in younger women who are more often diagnosed with early cancer.

How many women die from ovarian cancer?

- Ovarian cancer is the fourth most common cause of cancer death in women in the UK and the most common cause of gynaecological cancer death.
- About 4,370 women died of ovarian cancer in 2008 in the UK.
- Ovarian cancer mortality has remained fairly stable over the last thirty years, and in younger women it has decreased.
- In Europe (EU-27) around 29,000 women died from ovarian cancer in 2008.
- Worldwide, around 140,000 women died from ovarian cancer in 2008.

What causes *ovarian cancer*?

- The risk of ovarian cancer increases with age; more than 4 out of 5 cases are diagnosed in women over 50 years.
- Women with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation have an increased risk of ovarian cancer.
- Women who have not had children have a higher risk of ovarian cancer than women who have given birth.
- Oral contraceptive use reduces the risk of ovarian cancer and the protective effect persists for many years after stopping the Pill.
- Women taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for more than five years have an increased risk of ovarian cancer.
- Women with endometriosis have a greater than average risk of ovarian cancer.
- Research shows that women who have difficulties conceiving may have a higher risk of ovarian cancer than fertile women.
- Sterilisation by tubal ligation (having your tubes tied) has been shown to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer.
- The evidence suggests that women who breastfeed their children have a lower risk of ovarian cancer than those who do not.
- Research suggests that women who are overweight or obese have an increased risk of ovarian cancer.

Ovarian cancer - UK	Females
Number of new cases (UK 2008)	6,537
Rate per 100,000 population*	16.2
Number of deaths (UK 2008)	4,373
Rate per 100,000 population*	9.7
One-year survival rate (patients diagnosed in 2003-2007, England)	70.3%
Five-year survival rate (patients diagnosed in 2003-2007, England)	40.8%
Ten-year predicted survival rate (patients diagnosed in 2007, England)	30%

* Age-standardised to European standard population

Cancer Research UK's 'CancerStats – Key Facts' series provides accessible, top line statistics and facts on cancer. The charity's Statistical Information Team also produces evidence-based reports, charts and tabulations. All of this information can be accessed on our CancerStats website: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats> or by emailing stats.team@cancer.org.uk.