



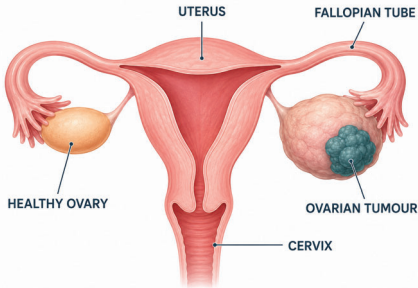
THE TRINIDAD & TOBAGO CANCER SOCIETY

Ovarian Cancer

Early Detection & Treatment Guidelines

What are the ovaries?

The ovaries are small, almond-shaped reproductive organs that produce estrogen and progesterone and release eggs. During menopause, ovarian function declines, and hormone levels drop.



What is ovarian cancer?

Ovarian cancer occurs when abnormal cells in the ovaries grow uncontrollably. It is one of the most aggressive gynecologic cancers due to late detection. Early detection significantly improves survival.

There are three main types:

- Epithelial Ovarian Cancer – Most common (90%).
- Germ Cell Tumors – Arise from egg-producing cells, more common in younger women.
- Stromal Tumors – Develop in hormone-producing tissues.

What are the symptoms of ovarian cancer?

Ovarian cancer is often silent in early stages but may cause:

- Abdominal bloating or feeling full quickly.
- Increased or urgent need to urinate.
- Pelvic or abdominal pain.
- Unexplained fatigue or weight loss.
- Changes in bowel habits (constipation or diarrhea).
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge.

Symptoms persisting for more than 2 weeks should be evaluated by a doctor.

Who is at risk for ovarian cancer?

The exact cause is unknown, but risk factors include:

- Age – Risk increases after 40, with most cases diagnosed after 60.
- Family history – A first-degree relative with ovarian, breast, or colorectal cancer raises risk.
- BRCA1 & BRCA2 mutations – Genetic testing is recommended for high-risk individuals.
- Endometriosis – A known risk factor for ovarian cancer.
- Hormonal factors – Early menstruation (before 12), late menopause (after 50), or hormone therapy.
- No pregnancies – Never giving birth slightly increases risk.

How is ovarian cancer diagnosed?

Unlike mammograms for breast cancer, no routine screening test exists for ovarian cancer. Diagnosis involves:

- Pelvic Exam – Detects abnormalities.
- CA-125 Blood Test – Measures a protein elevated in some ovarian cancers.
- Transvaginal Ultrasound (TVUS) – Uses sound waves to examine the ovaries.
- Imaging Tests (CT, MRI, PET Scan) – Evaluates tumor spread.
- Laparoscopy/Biopsy – Confirms diagnosis by analyzing ovarian tissue.
- Genetic Testing – Recommended for patients with family history.

How is ovarian cancer treated?

Treatment depends on cancer stage, patient age, and desire for future pregnancy:

- Surgery – First-line treatment to remove tumors.
- Chemotherapy – Used after surgery or for advanced cases.
- Targeted Therapy – Drugs like PARP inhibitors for BRCA-mutated tumors.
- Immunotherapy – Research is ongoing for ovarian cancer treatment.



Early detection improves survival rates! If you experience symptoms or have risk factors, talk to your doctor about screening.



BECOME A MEMBER 800 TTCS (8827)

#69 Dundonald Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad, W.I.
868.226.1221 | bookings@cancer.tt | www.cancertt.com

This publication was made possible by your donation to
The Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society.

Note: This information is based on guidelines
and data available as of 2026. For personalized
medical advice, always consult with a
healthcare professional.

www.who.int
www.health.com

