

News from the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Brian D. Levine, Freeholder Director • Patricia L. Walsh, Freeholder Deputy Director
Brian G. Gallagher, Freeholder • Shanel Y. Robinson, Freeholder • Sara Sooy, Freeholder

September 23, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September Is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Know the Signs & Symptoms, Early Detection Is the Best Protection

Did you know that ovarian cancer is the deadliest type of gynecologic cancer? According to the Regional Chronic Disease Coalition's partner, the American Cancer Society, approximately 22,530 women in the U.S. will be newly diagnosed with this cancer. In New Jersey, 700 women will be diagnosed with it, and 380 women will die from the disease.

Survival rates are discouraging for advanced-stage ovarian cancer. Patients who have been diagnosed with the disease have only a 47% chance of living for five years – but this depends on several factors, such as the type of ovarian cancer, at what stage it was diagnosed, and where it has spread throughout the body.

Since a Pap test does not detect ovarian cancer and there is a lack of reliable early-stage screening, this is a major reason for low survival rates. However, there are indications that if the disease is found in its early stages, this increases a patient's survival rate to more than 90%.

Early Detection Is the Best Protection

What is the answer to battling this awful disease? There is no simple solution or an easy cure for ovarian cancer. However, by being aware of the signs, symptoms and risk factors for it you may increase your chances of detecting the disease before it is too late.

Knowing your family's medical history is important, since your chances for developing the disease may increase if a family member has had ovarian cancer, or if you have had other types of cancer. Being aware of the factors listed below is essential:

Signs and Symptoms

- Bloating, feeling full quickly, indigestion or difficulty eating
- Abdominal or pelvic pain, urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)
- Fatigue, back pain, constipation, menstrual irregularities, pain with intercourse

Risk Factors

Know you and your family's medical history:

- Grandmother, mother, daughter, or sister have had or currently have ovarian cancer
- You have had breast, uterine, colon or rectum cancer, endometriosis, or are of Ashkenazi Jewish heritage

Know other risk factors:

- Getting older, being overweight or obese
- Having children later or never having a full-term pregnancy, using fertility treatment
- Taking hormone therapy after menopause

It is important to talk to your gynecologist or primary care physician if you experience any signs or symptoms for more than two weeks.

Reducing the Risk of Ovarian Cancer

Although there is no way to prevent the disease, there are ways to help lower your risk of developing it, such as:

- Using an oral contraceptive
- Having a full-term pregnancy, and breastfeeding
- Removal of the ovaries and fallopian tubes, or having a hysterectomy/tubal ligation

For more information about ovarian cancer, visit the Somerset County Department of Health's website at <https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/health>

To help spread the awareness about ovarian cancer, the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders has recently signed a proclamation recognizing Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. The Somerset County Department of Health, The Kaleidoscope of Hope Ovarian Cancer Foundation, and the Morris-Somerset Regional Chronic Disease Coalition are also helping to spread awareness of the disease.

To stay up to date with Somerset County events and information, sign up for [free email alerts](#) at www.co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

###