

Treatments for Ovarian Cancer

If you have ovarian cancer, you and your doctor should talk about the best treatments for you.

What are the treatments for ovarian cancer?

It can be treated with surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. Some women have more than one kind of treatment.

These things are important when deciding on the best treatment.

- your age
- your general health
- the size of the cancer
- the kind of cells in the cancer
- if the cancer has spread

Treatments for ovarian cancer:

Surgery: Most women have surgery to remove the ovaries, tubes, uterus, and cervix. If the cancer has spread, the doctor takes out as much of the cancer as he (she) can.

Chemotherapy means using drugs to kill cancer cells. There are many drugs that fight cancer.

How is chemotherapy given?

- One way is to take pills.
- One way is through a needle that a nurse puts in a vein (IV).
- Another way is through a thin tube that goes into the area where the cancer is.

After chemotherapy, some women have a second surgery so the doctor can see if the drugs worked.



Radiation uses cancer-killing rays to damage cancer cells and stop them from growing. Some people call radiation x-ray treatment. There are two kinds of radiation treatment. Some women have one kind and some women have both kinds.

- **External radiation** comes from a large machine and is given while you lie on a table. You go to a hospital or clinic 5 days a week for 5 to 6 weeks for treatment. Each treatment takes about 15 to 30 minutes. It does not hurt.
- **Internal radiation** comes from a tube placed in or near the cancer. Some women stay in the hospital, others can go home right after having the treatment.

Are there any other treatments for ovarian cancer?

Clinical trials are studies that test new cancer treatments on people who have cancer. They can be a good choice for some women with ovarian cancer.

Talking to your doctor about treatment

Writing down your questions before you talk to the doctor can help you remember them. It may also help to take a family member or friend with you.

What should I ask my doctor?

Here are some questions to ask before you decide on treatment.

- Has the cancer spread?
- What treatments are best for me?
- Can this treatment harm me?
- How will the treatments make me feel?
- How can you help me if the treatments make me sick?
- How long will the treatments last?

How can I find out more about treatment for ovarian cancer?

- Call the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). The call is free.
or
- Call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 (1-800-227-2345). The call is free.