

Please feel free to contact any of your Health Champions for help, advice or with suggestions of how to promote health and wellbeing in our school.

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## March is Ovarian and Prostate Cancer Awareness Month Join us for pinnies at break on Wednesday 16th April

### Ovarian Cancer

Ovarian cancer is the fifth most common cause of cancer deaths in women. Over 7,000 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer each year but most are not diagnosed until the disease has spread. The earlier it's diagnosed the more chance of successful treatment. Ovarian cancer is more common in women over 50 and your risk is higher if you have two or more close female relatives (mother, sister, daughter) who have had ovarian or breast cancer.

### Symptoms

Ovarian cancer symptoms may be mistaken for other conditions such as IBS which often makes it difficult to diagnose. It's important to recognise what is not normal for you. If you have any of the following symptoms most days for three weeks or more, and they are not normal for you, it is important to see your doctor to get them checked out.

- Increased abdominal size or persistent bloating
- Lack of appetite, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- Persistent low abdominal or back pain
- Needing to wee more urgently or more often than normal

Occasionally there may be other symptoms such as changes in bowel habits, feeling very tired, unexplained weight loss or loss of appetite. Most cases of ovarian cancer occur in post menopausal women although it does occur in younger women. Any post menopausal bleeding should always be checked out by your doctor.

### Diagnosis

There is currently no NHS screening programme for ovarian cancer (a smear will not detect it) but if you experience the above symptoms regularly (more than 12 times a month) your GP should organise a CA125 blood test and, depending on the result of this, may refer you for an ultrasound scan. If the results of both tests indicate that ovarian cancer might be a possibility, you will then be referred to a gynaecological oncologist for further tests.

### Treatment

There are two main treatments for ovarian cancer, surgery and chemotherapy. The team of specialists looking after you will discuss which option is best for you. You may be offered one of these treatments or a combination of both.

See over page for organisations who provide support and information  
Sources: [www.targetovariancancer.org.uk](http://www.targetovariancancer.org.uk) and [ovarian.org.uk](http://ovarian.org.uk)

## Useful Links



**Target Ovarian Cancer**  
targetovariancancer  
.org.uk



**Ovarian Cancer Action**  
ovarian.org.uk



**The Eve Appeal**  
eveappeal.org.uk



**Prostate Cancer UK**  
prostatecanceruk.org



**Macmillan**  
macmillan.org.uk

## Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men with more than 41,700 men diagnosed with it each year in the UK alone. 1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer in their lives. You are more at risk if you are over 50, of African-Caribbean or African origin, or have a father or brother who has had prostate cancer. Prostate cancer can often grow slowly to start with and may never cause any problems, known as '*localised prostate cancer*' which affects just the prostate. Some men have prostate cancer that is more likely to spread, known as '*locally advanced prostate cancer*', which needs treatment to stop it spreading outside the prostate.

## Symptoms

Localised prostate cancer doesn't usually cause any symptoms but some men may notice some urinary problems although they may be mild and not noticeable. There are, however, certain changes to look out for:

- Needing to urinate more often than usual, including at night
- Difficulty starting to urinate
- Straining or taking a long time to finish urinating
- Weak flow when you urinate
- Feeling that you're not emptying your bladder fully
- Needing to rush to the toilet – sometimes leaking before you get there
- Dribbling urine after you finish.

Less common symptoms to look out for:

- Pain when urinating
- Pain when ejaculating
- Blood in your urine or semen (can be a sign of other health problems)

These symptoms are also common in many different conditions, not just prostate cancer but if you have any concerns or are experiencing any of the symptoms above it is important to contact your doctor as soon as possible. The earlier a cancer is picked up, the easier it is to treat successfully.

## Diagnosis

Your GP will ask you about your symptoms, how long you have had them, whether they are getting worse over time, and how they are affecting your life. They will also check whether your symptoms could be caused by other health problems, such as diabetes, or by any medicines you're taking. You are also likely to need a urine test to rule out infection, a blood test to check your PSA level (prostate-specific antigen) and may also have a rectal examination to check for abnormalities.

## Treatment

There are lots of different treatments for prostate cancer and the type of treatment needed will depend on how early your cancer has been diagnosed. Your doctor will explain what is available to help you decide on the best course of treatment for you.

Source: prostatecanceruk.org