bloated tummy? need to wee more? tummy pain? always feeling full?

Ovarian cancer symptoms

Ovarian cancer symptoms are:
- frequent – they usually happen more than 12 times a month
- persistent – they don’t go away
- new – they are not normal for you and may have started in the last year
  - persistent pelvic or abdominal pain (that’s your tummy and below)
  - increased abdominal size/persistent bloating – not bloating that comes and goes
- difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- urinary symptoms (needng to wee more urgently or more often than usual)

Occasionally there are other symptoms:
- changes in bowel habit
- extreme fatigue (feeling very tired)
- unexplained weight loss
- loss of appetite

If you regularly experience any of these symptoms, which are not normal for you, it is important that you see your GP. It is unlikely that your symptoms are caused by a serious problem, but it is important to be checked out.

Worried about your symptoms?

Be aware Know what’s normal for you and note symptoms in a diary or calendar.

Talk Visit your GP about symptoms that are new for you. Take this leaflet along, share your symptoms diary and tell your GP if two or more relatives in your close family have had ovarian or breast cancer.

Return Other conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) have symptoms similar to ovarian cancer but if your symptoms don’t clear up, go back to your GP or seek a second opinion, even if you’ve had tests.

What tests might your GP do?
If your symptoms are frequent and persistent your GP should do a CA125 blood test. Depending upon the result they may order scans of your tummy and ovaries. One is an internal scan, but it’s quick and easy.

www.targetovariancancer.org.uk
"My tummy had become increasingly bloated over some months and I needed the toilet more. I finally visited my GP when I could only eat half a sandwich because I felt so full. I had honestly thought there was nothing wrong, I’d explained away each symptom as a minor problem.

My message is to know what is normal for your body, be symptom aware and visit your GP to get checked. It could be nothing but that visit could save your life..."

Did you know?
- 7,000 women a year are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the UK.
- Cervical screening tests – sometimes known as smear tests – will not help to detect ovarian cancer.
- Some symptoms of ovarian cancer are similar to those seen in more common conditions, like IBS, so GPs may find it hard to diagnose.
- Most cases of ovarian cancer are diagnosed in women who have gone through the menopause. But younger women can also get ovarian cancer.
- Just three per cent of women are very confident at spotting a symptom of ovarian cancer.
- The sooner ovarian cancer is detected, the easier it is to treat. Survival can be up to 90 per cent for women diagnosed with early ovarian cancer in the UK.

Where can you find more information?

Target Ovarian Cancer is the national ovarian cancer charity working to save lives and help women diagnosed live their lives to the full, wherever they are in the UK.

- @TargetOvarianCancer
- TargetOvarianCancer.org.uk
- facebook.com/TargetOvarianCancer
- info@targetovariancancer.org.uk
- 020 7923 5475

NHS advice

Telephone 111 in England and Scotland, or 0845 4647 in Wales to speak to an adviser about any health worries.

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk : an A–Z of all health information