



# Ovarian cancer

Know the facts.  
Know your body.



Ovarian cancer is often called “the silent killer” because women don’t usually recognize its symptoms until it’s already in a later stage and has spread to other parts of the body.<sup>1</sup> That’s why it’s important to take advantage of your health plan by meeting with your doctor for your annual physical. It’s a great way to learn more about the early signs and symptoms.



## The facts

The ovaries are the almond-sized organs on either side of your uterus. They produce eggs for reproduction and hormones. And ovarian cancer can start in either the ovaries or at the far end of the fallopian tubes. When it’s found early, about 94% of women live more than five years after diagnosis. But many times it isn’t found until it has spread.<sup>2</sup>



## Talk to your doctor about your risk factors

Make an appointment to go over your chances of developing ovarian cancer. Annual physicals are covered by most plans at 100%. Some of the most common risk factors to discuss with your doctor include:<sup>2,3</sup>

- **Age.** It’s most often found in women 63 or older.
- **Weight.** If you’re obese, you’re at greater risk.
- **Reproductive history.** Your risk is higher if you:
  - Started your period before age 12 or menopause after 50.
  - Never had a full-term pregnancy, or started having children after age 35.
  - Had fertility treatment or post-menopausal hormone therapy.

Some types of ovarian cancer can even run in your family, so be sure to go over your family health history with your doctor, too.

## Want to know more?

To find care and get more information about your benefits, download our Sydney Health mobile app or go to [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com).

### Sources

- 1 National Women’s Health Network website: *Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month: The Silent Killer Among Us!* (accessed December 2019): [nwhn.org](https://www.nwhn.org).
- 2 American Cancer Society website: *Ovarian Cancer* (accessed November 2019): [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).
- 3 Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance website: *Risk Factors* (accessed November 2019): [ocrahope.org](https://www.ocrahope.org).



## Listen to your body

There aren't any reliable screening tests for ovarian cancer, yet. And a lot of early warning signs can mimic symptoms that are often caused by less serious issues. So it's important to pay attention to how regular and severe any symptoms are. If you experience any of the following almost daily for more than three weeks, you should make an appointment with your doctor right away.<sup>2</sup>

- Bloating
- Pain in your pelvis or stomach
- Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
- Feeling an urgent need to urinate or needing to go more often

Other symptoms can include fatigue, indigestion, back pain, constipation, pain during sex and irregular periods.

### Did you know?

Some things about your reproductive history may lower your risk of developing ovarian cancer, such as:<sup>2</sup>

- Having a child
- Having a child before age 26
- Breastfeeding a child
- Taking certain birth control medications

