

Since its inception in 1997, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance has been the face (and voice) of a national network for ovarian cancer survivors and activists. Its mission is to help save women's lives by advocating for increased federal funding for research that leads to an effective early detection test, better treatments, and ultimately a cure for the disease. It also educates women and health care practitioners about the symptoms and risk factors of ovarian cancer, to improve the chances that women will be diagnosed earlier.

As the umbrella organization for more than 45 national, regional and local ovarian cancer Partner Member Groups, the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance leverages this power to demand a different future for everyone who has been or will be touched by ovarian cancer. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the organization is funded through individual contributions as well as a mix of corporate and foundation gifts.

Ovarian cancer knows no boundaries or borders, affecting women of every age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

It is the deadliest of all the gynecologic cancers and a leading cause of cancer death among women. Its symptoms are subtle, difficult to diagnose and often misdiagnosed because many symptoms mimic other less threatening problems. Therefore, because there is no reliable early detection test at this time, we educate women to be on alert for early indications, and to be persistent in their efforts to be properly diagnosed. Currently only one in five women is diagnosed in the early stages, when survival is most likely.

Awareness: The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance focuses on increasing awareness and early recognition of symptoms. Symptoms include:

- Bloating
- Pelvic and abdominal pain
- Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- Urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)

Initiatives include: serving as an information resource through the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance's Web site and e-newsletter; providing awareness materials through its online store; and offering a safe online community for the ovarian cancer community to network and share their experiences.

Education: The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance serves as a resource center for survivors. It also works to improve medical professionals' knowledge about ovarian cancer diagnosis and the need to provide referral to the correct specialist (a gynecologic oncologist).

Programs include the Survivors Teaching Students: Saving Women's LivesSM with support from the Entertainment Industry Foundation, where survivors introduce third-year medical students to the realities of ovarian cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Additionally, our Annual Conference brings together leading authorities for research symposia, clinical trials forums, survivorship sessions, and advocacy training. Participants come from all over the country for support and learning as this is the single most important event on ovarian cancer in the country.

Advocacy: The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance is the only organization that specifically secures and ensures continuation of federal resources for ovarian cancer research. Advancing research efforts is critical today because ovarian cancer research is greatly under-funded relative to the disease's high mortality rate. Unlike most cancers, the mortality rate has not significantly changed in 30 years.

Initiatives promote: policy, legislation, research and programs that increase understanding about the cause, prevention, detection and treatment of this disease. Partner Member Organizations (a national network of survivors, friends and family) are central to these efforts.

The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance's **Annual Conference** sponsors the *Ovarian Cancer Capitol Hill Day* event – all to support state and national efforts to advise and educate legislators about this deadliest of gynecologic diseases.



**Ovarian Cancer
National Alliance**
We work to save women's lives