



## **Meet with your Member of Congress this August**

Every member of Congress has one or more offices in his or her congressional district. Most members of Congress regularly return to their districts and hold meetings with their constituents. You can be one of the people who meets with them — all you have to do is request a meeting, be patient, and be flexible.

Meeting with your member of Congress or a staff member is the most effective tool in the activist arsenal. Take advantage of it! Here's how:

### **Create a meeting group**

If you participated in Advocacy Day, you know how to run a constituent meeting with your Member of Congress and Senators. You can educate others in your community about the basics of advocacy by asking them to attend the meeting with you.

### **Find out who handles scheduling**

Call the member's Washington, D.C., office through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121, or call the district office and ask for the name of the person who handles in-district scheduling requests.

### **Get a fax number**

Ask for the fax number where the person can be reached. You can also go to your member of Congress' web site to find this information. Go to [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov) to find your member of Congress' site.

### **Put your request in writing**

Write a letter requesting a meeting and address it to the person who handles in-district scheduling requests. Be sure to include who will attend the meeting, your Ovarian Cancer National Alliance affiliation, which days you are available to meet (keeping in mind that members tend to be in-district on Friday afternoons, weekends, and Mondays), and what issues you would like to discuss. You can state that you would like to talk about ovarian cancer awareness programs and research funding.

### **Fax it**

Fax your request to the person responsible for in-district scheduling. Faxing is a more timely method of delivery than standard mail but still holds the formality of a hard copy that the member of Congress' staff can use for internal purposes.

### **Confirm the request was received**

Wait a few days and call your contact person to confirm receipt of your request. Ask if the member of Congress is available for a meeting, and if not, ask to meet with the district or state director. (Keep in mind that it likely will take several follow-up calls to get a meeting scheduled. Don't get discouraged!)

**Follow up**

Call to follow up every few days to see if your meeting has been scheduled.

**Confirm the meeting**

Once a meeting is scheduled, call the day before to confirm. This also will give you the opportunity to confirm who else will be in attendance.

**Prepare for your meeting and find out the latest from Washington, D.C.**

You can email the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance's Public Policy Department at [advocacy@ovariancancer.org](mailto:advocacy@ovariancancer.org) for information on the status of the issues you will be discussing as well as assistance with preparing materials for your meeting.

You can use the similar leave-behind materials you received at Advocacy Day (you can print the PDFs off at <http://www.ovariancancer.org/advocacyprep>) . Be sure to ask the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance if there have been any updates on your Member of Congress's status in terms of cosponsorship.

**Hold a pre-meeting meeting**

Have everyone who is attending the meeting come together a few minutes before the appointment to discuss who will say what. You may consider choosing someone to lead the meeting by facilitating introductions and keeping the meeting moving.

**Tell the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance what happened**

Keep us in the loop so we know how your meeting went.

**Send a thank-you note**

The best way to recap what happened at the meeting is to send a thank-you letter recounting the issues you discussed and any commitments that were made.

Good luck, and have fun!

The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance