

DEDICATED EXPERIENCED SUPPORT

SHARE

sharecancersupport.org

Information for Everyone About Uterine Cancer



Welcome to SHARE!

SHARE is a national nonprofit that supports, educates, and empowers anyone who has been diagnosed with women's cancers, and provides outreach to the general public about signs and symptoms. We are a compassionate community of knowledgeable survivors, women living with cancer, and healthcare professionals. We are ready to listen to your concerns, respond to your questions, and provide education to help you make sense of your diagnosis and treatment.

SHARE is dedicated to serving women of all races, cultures, backgrounds, and identities. Because no one should have to face uterine cancer alone.

SHARE is here for you and all of our services are free.

Uterine/Endometrial Cancer: Information for Everyone

Cancer is a disease that makes cells begin to grow out of control. Uterine cancer, also referred to as endometrial cancer, is the growth of these cells in the lining of the uterus (or endometrium). Uterine sarcoma, a more rare form of cancer, is the growth of cancer cells in the muscles or other supporting tissues of the uterus.

Did You Know?

- Uterine cancer is the most common type of gynecologic cancer and the fourth most common cancer for women in the United States.
- Black women are more often diagnosed with advanced uterine cancer or more aggressive types which may affect their chance of survival.
- The Pap Smear test does not screen for uterine cancer. The only cancer the Pap Smear test screens for is cervical cancer.



Uterine Cancer Signs and Symptoms



- Vaginal bleeding, spotting or brownish discharge after menopause
- Irregular or heavy bleeding in younger women
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Symptoms common in later stages:
 - Feeling a mass in the pelvis
 - Losing weight without trying
- Less common symptoms:
 - Difficult or painful urination
 - Pain during intercourse

Although these symptoms can be caused by factors other than cancer, it's important to be evaluated by a gynecologist who may recommend additional testing. Bleeding after menopause always needs evaluation. The diagnosis of uterine cancer often relies on obtaining a tissue sample through a surgical procedure called a biopsy.

Risk Factors for Uterine Cancer

A risk factor is anything that increases a person's chance of developing a certain illness. Having one or more risk factors associated with a disease does not mean you will develop that disease. Discussing risk factors with your doctor may help you make informed lifestyle choices including preventative measures appropriate to your risk.

- **Obesity** - Being overweight can increase uterine cancer risk; uterine cancer is 3 times more common among obese women than those at a healthier weight.
- **Age** - Uterine cancer risk increases with age.
- **Genetics** - Lynch Syndrome is a hereditary cancer syndrome that is linked to an increase in uterine cancer. The lifetime risk of developing uterine cancer for women with Lynch Syndrome is 40%-60%.
- **Family History** - If several family members have/had uterine cancer, your healthcare professional may recommend genetic testing.

Risk Factors for Uterine Cancer (cont'd)

- **Reproductive History** - Menstruation before age 12 and menopause after age 55 may have a higher risk.
- **Nutrition and Diet** - Diets high in fat can increase risk.
- **Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)** - Taking estrogen alone, without progesterin, can increase risk.
- **Tamoxifen Use** - Tamoxifen, which is often used to treat breast cancer, can slightly increase the risk of developing uterine cancer.

Screening for Uterine Cancer

There is no standard screening test for uterine cancer for women without symptoms. Some tests and procedures that can be used to diagnose endometrial cancer or uterine sarcoma include: pelvic examination, transvaginal ultrasound, endometrial biopsy, hysteroscopy and dilation and curettage (D&C).



How to Be Your Own Best Advocate

- Visit a gynecologist every year for a check-up.
- Maintain a healthy weight and exercise regularly.
- Learn about your family's health history.
- Know your body and check out any symptoms that persist.
- See a doctor if you have abnormal bleeding. Any bleeding after menopause is not normal.
- Call SHARE to speak with someone who can provide information, guidance and support.

If you've been recently diagnosed with uterine cancer, or if you're a survivor, we're here to help you.

Toll Free Uterine Cancer Helpline: 844.582.6005

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Check out SHARE's Educational Programs and Support Groups

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