



Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Worksheet for Women

While a tremendous amount of progress has been made in cancer research, we still don't understand exactly what causes most cancers. However, we know of many factors that place us at increased risk for different cancers. Some of these factors are beyond our control, but there are others that we can do something about. And today, more than ever before, we have screening tests available to help us detect some cancers in their earliest stages.

Below you will find helpful information on the most common cancers that can affect you as a woman – what puts you at risk, how you can lower this risk, and ways that you can make sure that if you do develop cancer, it is found early, when it is most easily treated. The final column on each sheet allows room for you to develop your own plan of action to combat cancer.

It's important to realize that some factors may place you at higher risk than others, and some behaviors may lower your risk more than others. Many cancers develop without any of these risk factors present. There is not enough room here to go into more detail - this is intended only as a general guide. For a more thorough explanation of cancer risk factors, visit our Cancer Resource Center at www.cancer.org, or call us any time, day or night, at 1-800-ACS-2345. And if you have any risk factors or haven't had your early detection tests, please take this worksheet and discuss this with your doctor.

Screening for Cancer in General

The American Cancer Society recommends that all women get a cancer-related checkup every 3 years between the ages of 20 and 40, and every year thereafter. This checkup should include health counseling and, depending on a person's age, might include examinations for cancers of the skin, thyroid, mouth, lymph nodes, and ovaries, as well as for some diseases other than cancer.

Special tests for certain cancers are recommended as outlined below.

We're available to answer your questions about cancer any time, day or night. Call us at 1-800-ACS-2345, or visit us online at www.cancer.org.

Ovarian Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Screening Tests	Your Action Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ' Have you already gone through menopause? ' Did you begin menstruating before age 12, or go through menopause after age 50? ' Did you have your first child after age 30 (or have no children)? ' Do you have a family history of ovarian cancer? ' Do you have a personal history of breast cancer? ' Have you been on hormone replacement therapy for more than 5 years? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ' Using oral contraceptives for several years ' Watching for and reporting signs and symptoms (although all of these can have other causes): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abdominal swelling ▪ Vaginal bleeding ▪ Back and/or leg pain ▪ Chronic stomach pain ' Talking with your doctor about the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy and your risks of cancer and other diseases, like heart disease and osteoporosis ' Talking with your doctor about having your ovaries removed, if you are at high risk. (This surgery causes sudden menopause). 	<p>There are no effective and proven tests for early detection of ovarian cancer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ' As part of your regular health maintenance, you should undergo a periodic and thorough pelvic examination as directed by your doctor. 	<p>Steps to Lower Your Risk:</p> <p>Screening:</p>