

DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Ovarian Cancer

Being diagnosed with ovarian cancer can feel intimidating, but you and your doctor will work together to help take control of your symptoms. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Metastases	When cancer cells spread from the origin site to other places in the body.
Biopsy	A test that examines tissue or other specimen samples to look for cancer cells.
CA 125	A blood test that measures levels of cancer antigen 125 in the body. The test can be used in the diagnosis phase as well as to see how well a treatment is working.
Debulking	Another name for cytoreductive surgery, a procedure to remove as much of the tumor as possible. It may be done before radiation or chemotherapy is started.
Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy	A type of chemotherapy that is pumped directly into the abdomen through a special tube (catheter).
Malignant Ascites	A collection of fluid in the abdomen and pelvis that has cancer cells in it.
Oophorectomy	A surgery to remove the ovaries.
Prognosis	A doctor's prediction of how a patient's cancer will progress.
Salpingo-oophorectomy	A surgery to remove the ovaries and fallopian tubes.

Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your cancer.

About Symptoms

- Does ovarian cancer usually have symptoms? What are they?
- I haven't had any symptoms, how can I have cancer?
- Are there symptoms that indicate I should go to the ER or call your office?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- Does having ovarian cysts increase my risk of cancer?
- What are the different risk factors for ovarian cancer? Are there any I can work on (modifiable)?

About Diagnosis

- What tests do I need to have?
- What are the different types of ovarian cancer? Which type do I have?
- How is ovarian cancer graded?
- What grade is my cancer?
- Will the grade change over time or with treatment?
- What should I share with my family, friends, and/or support system about my diagnosis?

About Treatment

- What are the side effects of the medications you prescribed?
- Will I need surgery?
- What are the odds the cancer will come back after remission?
- Are there any tests or screenings I will need to have?
