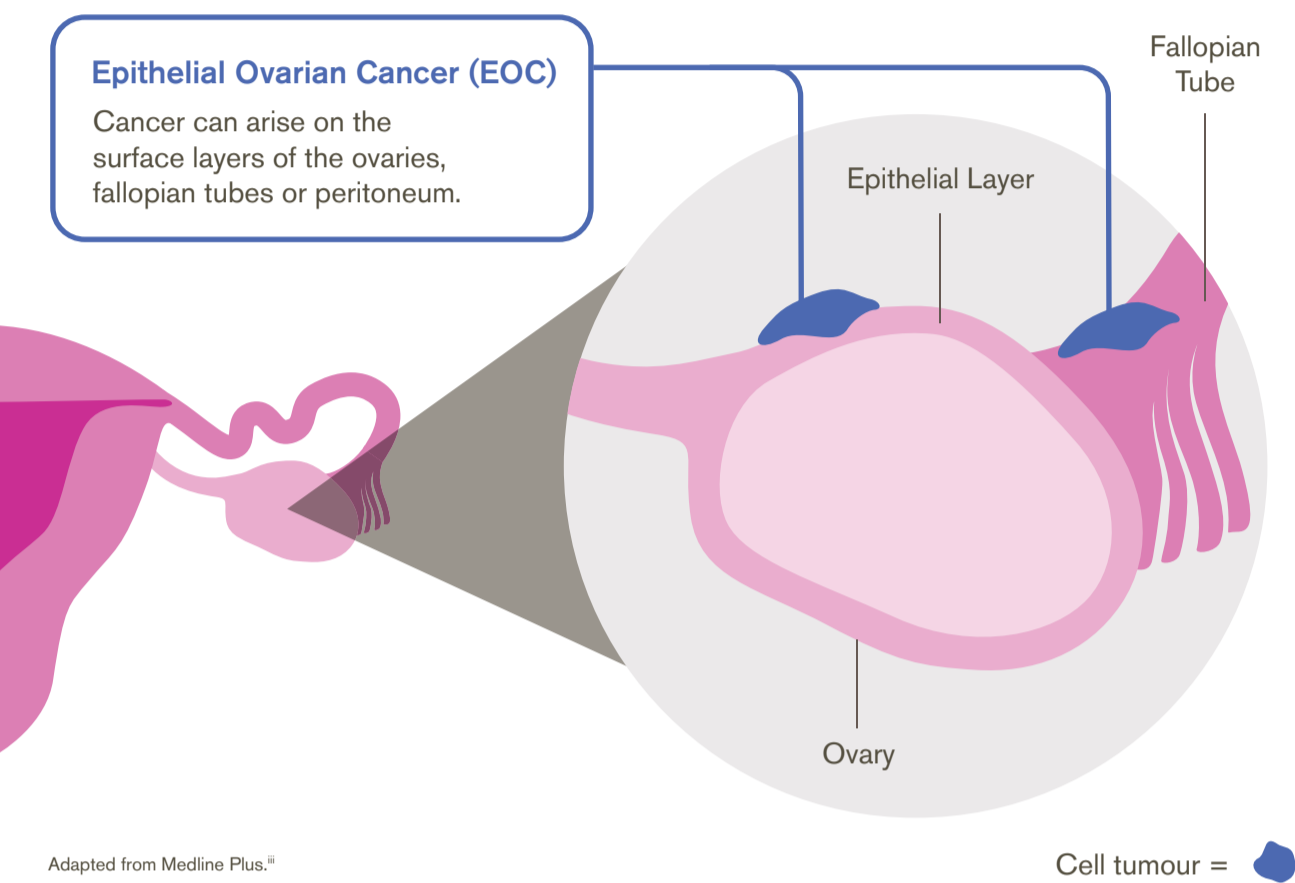


About Ovarian Cancer

Ovarian cancer is a form of cancer that occurs due to the abnormal and uncontrolled growth of cells from the ovaries, fallopian tubes or peritoneum.ⁱ

Ovarian cancer can start from three common cell types: epithelium, germ cells and stromal cells.

The most common type of ovarian cancer is epithelial, which accounts for 90% of all cases of ovarian cancer.ⁱ



Adapted from Medline Plus.ⁱⁱⁱ

Causes

It's not clear what causes ovarian cancer, but risk factors include:^{i,iii}

- Family history of ovarian or breast cancer
- Deleterious gene mutations including the *BRCA* gene
- Previously having endometriosis
- Increasing age
- Infertility
- Smoking
- Lynch syndrome (genetic disorder)



Signs & Symptoms

Many women with early ovarian cancer have no signs or symptoms and when present, they are similar to other, more common and benign conditions. This can make for a challenging and late diagnosis. Some early symptoms are:^{i,iii}

- Abdominal pain, swelling or bloating
- Changes in bowel movements
- Pelvic and lower back pain
- Fatigue
- Frequent or urgent need to urinate



Patients & Prevalence



Epithelial ovarian cancer is the **most common** type of ovarian cancerⁱ

An estimated **3,100** Canadian women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2020. An estimated **1,950** have died from the disease^{iv}

Nearly **75% of women** with ovarian cancer are diagnosed at **later stages** (Stage III/IV)^v

Ovarian cancer is the 8th most common cancer in women and is the **most fatal gynecological cancer** in Canada^{iv}

Nearly **75% of women** diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer will experience **relapse**^v

5-year survival rate according to Canadian Cancer Statistics 2019 report for 2012–2014 period is **45%**^{iv}

Diagnosis

To help diagnose ovarian cancer, exams and tests may be used, such as:ⁱⁱ

- Biopsy
- Physical evaluation and pelvic exam
- Ultrasound and other imaging tests
- Blood tests



Treatment

In general, treatment for ovarian cancer may include a combination of the following:^{ii,iii}

- Surgery
- Targeted therapy
- Chemotherapy



References

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- ^{iv} Canadian Cancer Society. Ovarian cancer statistics. 2020
- ^v Lheureux, S., Braunstein, M., & Oza, A. M. (2019). Epithelial ovarian cancer: evolution of management in the era of precision medicine. *CA: a cancer journal for clinicians*, 69(4), 280-304.