

## Join Atrium Health Navicent in Observing Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

*Ovarian cancer ranks fifth in cancer deaths among women*

**MACON, Ga., Sept. 20, 2022** – In observance of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Atrium Health Navicent encourages women to learn the risk factors and symptoms of ovarian cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. When cancer starts in the ovaries, it is called ovarian cancer.

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), ovarian cancer ranks fifth in cancer deaths among women, accounting for more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system. A woman's risk of getting ovarian cancer during her lifetime is about 1 in 78. The ACS estimates that in 2022, about 19,880 women will receive a new diagnosis of ovarian cancer, resulting in 12,810 deaths. In Georgia, it's estimated that 610 new cases of ovarian cancer will occur in 2022, resulting in 410 deaths.

It's important to understand the risk factors for getting ovarian cancer. Women at a higher risk:

- Are middle-aged or older. About 90 percent of women who get ovarian cancer are over 40.
- Have close family members (such as a mother, sister, aunt or grandmother) who have had ovarian cancer
- Have a genetic abnormality called BRCA1 or BRCA2, or one associated with Lynch syndrome
- Have had breast, uterine or colon cancer
- Have endometriosis, a condition where tissue from the lining of the uterus grows elsewhere in the body
- Have never given birth or have had trouble getting pregnant

Although there are no reliable screening tests for ovarian cancer, annual appointments with your gynecologist can lead to early detection and treatment. It's important to talk to your doctor if you have one or more of the following:

- Vaginal bleeding (particularly if you are past menopause) or vaginal discharge that is not normal for you
- Pain or pressure in the pelvic area
- Abdominal or back pain
- Bloating
- Feeling full too quickly, or difficulty eating
- A change in your bathroom habits, such as a more frequent need to urinate, or constipation

"It's vitally important that women stay current on annual well-woman visits so a physician can help detect ovarian cancer and other conditions early when treatment is most effective," said Dr. Felisha Kitchen, an Atrium Health Navicent OB-GYN and director of clinical practice for women's services. "If you're experiencing new gynecologic symptoms or have concerns, schedule an appointment with your primary care physician or gynecologist so further testing or screening can diagnose the cause."

Atrium Health Navicent Women's Care OB/GYN offers a wide range of gynecological services for patients ranging from teenagers through menopause. In addition to appointments available in Macon, Atrium Health Navicent Women's Care OB/GYN [offers care in Forsyth](#) at the Monroe Medical Complex, located at 120 N. Lee St., Suite C. To schedule an appointment call 478-633-1821.

Atrium Health Peyton Anderson Cancer Center provides cancer treatment and survivorship services for patients diagnosed with a variety of cancers, including ovarian cancer. With the new addition of medical oncology services, Atrium Health Navicent offers a full continuum of care for central Georgia patients.

If you or a loved one has concerns about cancer risk factors, available screenings or cancer care, contact Atrium Health Navicent Peyton Anderson Cancer Center at 478-633-3000. To find a doctor, visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org) and click “Find A Doctor.”

**About Atrium Health Navicent**

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of healthcare in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation's leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org).

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