



FACTSHEET FOR WOMEN LIVING IN VICTORIA WITH A GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCER

This fact sheet has been developed from feedback given by women who have been diagnosed with a gynaecological cancer. It outlines commonly used resources and services, but should not be seen as an exhaustive list. Inclusion does not necessarily mean endorsement.

“All women with a suspected or diagnosed gynaecological cancer should have access to a comprehensive multi-disciplinary team led by a gynaecological oncologist to provide high quality management tailored to her needs to achieve the best outcome for each woman” - *National Gynaecological Cancer Service Delivery and Resource Framework – Cancer Australia and The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, 2011.*

Public gynaecological oncology providers are located at Southern Health (Monash), Royal Women’s Hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and Sunshine Hospital.

SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

Organisations or websites with a focus on supportive care for gynaecological cancers:

[Breacan](#) is an information and support service for people affected by a gynaecological cancer or breast cancer, their families and friends. It is a statewide service available to people throughout Victoria and is staffed by peer support volunteers, all of whom have had a cancer experience. Phone 1300 781 500.

[Ovarian Cancer Australia](#) aims to ensure everyone affected by ovarian cancer feels personally supported and has access to and information about treatment and research. It offers a range of support services and resources including *Resilience*. Phone 1300 660 334.

[Cancer Australia](#) – (formerly the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre) works to reduce the impact of cancer and improve the well being of those diagnosed by ensuring that evidence informs cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment and supportive care.

[Cancer Australia Directory of Gynaecological Oncology Services](#)

[Gynaecological Cancer Support](#) A website containing a variety of important tools and information for women with gynaecological cancer including treatment, communication, emotions and survivorship.

[Gynaecological Awareness Information Network \(GAIN\)](#) is a not-for-profit organisation driving awareness of, and education about, gynaecological health matters. It assists women to find the information they need to make the right health choices, and to provide support as they face life-changing challenges.

[Gynaecological Cancer Society](#) : Emotional Support Helpline 1800 700 288 Helpline is available 9am to 5pm Monday – Friday. Confidential emotional support and practical assistance staffed by trained

people who have experienced a gynaecological cancer. Available to all women with a gynaecological cancer, their carers and family members.

[Jean Hailes for Women's Health](#): a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the physical and emotional wellbeing of women across Australia. Translates the latest research findings into practical health and lifestyle approaches for women and professional advice for nurses, GPs and health specialists. Phone (03) 9562 7555

Cancer Councils:

[Cancer Council Australia](#)

[Cancer Council Victoria](#) – Information and Support Service. Confidential Information and Support Helpline – 13 11 20 Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm Trained cancer nurses can talk about the effects of specific types of cancer and explain what will happen during processes like chemotherapy, radiotherapy or other cancer treatments, although they are unable to give individual medical advice.

[Cancer Index](#) - a guide to cancer-related information from around the world.

Gynaecological cancer specific support groups in Victoria:

- Ovarian Cancer Australia's monthly support group or telephone support group (for women living in rural or regional areas or not close to a metropolitan support group). Welcomes women to join with any gynaecological cancers.
Enquiries about the support group or to register for the telephone support group: support@ovariancancer.net.au or 1300 660 334.
- Ovarian Cancer Support Group at Ringwood Private Hospital (In the Hospital boardroom) 36 Mt Dandenong Rd, Ringwood East, last Friday of the month 10:00am. Welcomes women with any gynaecological cancers. Enquiries: Tracey.Moroney@healthscope.com.au or 03 8804 4108
- Cervical Cancer Support Group – for details, including the venue and date of next meeting (Bayside) please contact Christine on 03 9596 4111
- Gynaecological Cancers Internet Support Group, Cancer Council Victoria. Participation is free and available throughout Australia. Call 13 11 20 or CSG@cancervic.org.au to register.
- GO Support: Albury Wodonga - Susan bcs@dragnet.com.au or 02 6025 0261
- Women's Cancer Support Group (any type of cancer) Ballan District: second Tuesday of every month at Ballan District Health Care 7-9pm, Jacinta Masters 5366 7981 or Sue Bartlett 0478 308 425

To enquire about cancer support groups in your local area contact [Cancer Council Victoria](#)

Other Support organisations:

[Life Circle](#) - Telephone counselling service for those with a life threatening illness Phone: 1300 364 673

[Look Good...Feel Better](#) - a free community service for women undergoing cancer treatment to help them manage the appearance related side effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy Phone 1800 650 960

[The Warwick Foundation](#) - supporting young adults 18-40 years old with cancer. Phone (03) 9348 2373

[Canteen](#) – one of the services of Canteen is to support children (aged 12-24) whose parent has cancer. Phone (03) 9912 4221

[Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre](#) – Heidelberg. Wellness focus to ensure people have the best possible support during their cancer experience. Supports people physically, emotionally and socially, regardless of where you have been treated

Clinical trials & Research:

To review the range of clinical trials currently being carried out, visit the [Australian Clinical Trials Registry](#) website or the [Australia New Zealand Gynaecological Oncology Group](#) (ANZGOG) website.

Genetics:

The Victorian Family Cancer Genetics Service is for those worried about their risk of cancer because of a family history of cancer. Services include testing, medical advice, counselling, support and the chance to take part in research. A visit is free and confidential. Interpreters are available on request. Available from:

- [Austin Health Clinical Genetics Service](#), Heidelberg (03) 9496 3027
- [The Peter Mac Familial Cancer Centre](#), East Melbourne (03) 9656 1199
- [The Royal Melbourne Hospital Familial Cancer Centre](#), Parkville (03) 9342 7151
- [The Southern Health Familial Cancer Centre](#), Clayton (03) 9594 2009

Lymphoedema:

[Lymphoedema – what you need to know](#)

To find a clinic or practitioner, contact [Lymphoedema Association of Victoria](#) or 1300 852 850

Fertility:

[“Can I Still Have Children?” booklet – Fertility options for young women having chemotherapy and radiotherapy.](#) Published by Melbourne IVF.

Managing Menopause:

- [Menopause Symptoms After Cancer \(MSAC\) Clinic](#) Royal Women’s Hospital. Phone (03) 8345 3032. The clinic is staffed by a specialist team of gynaecologists, endocrinologists, psychiatrists and psychologists and general practitioners who specialise in menopause and managing menopausal symptoms, especially as a result of early menopause due to surgery or chemotherapy. GP referral required.
- [Menopause Clinic at Southern Health](#), Monash Medical Centre, Moorabbin. Phone (03) 9928 8111. GP referral required.
- Australian Early Menopause Network: www.aemn.com.au

Sexuality:

Recognising the importance of sexuality is a key quality of life issue following a cancer diagnosis. Sadly, women and their partners, for many reasons, suffer silently, harbouring significant side effects and relationship issues as a result of cancer and cancer treatment.

- [Cancer Council Victoria](#) and the Royal Women's Hospital offer a free, confidential telephone counselling service on intimacy and self-confidence for people with cancer and their partners, anywhere in Victoria. has developed a telephone psychosexual counselling service for cancer patients and partners. Contact Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 for details or to make an appointment.
- Relationships and sexuality counselling services are available to women with cancer at the [Royal Women's Hospital](#) and [Monash Medical Centre](#), Moorabbin
- [Cancer Australia booklet](#): Intimacy and Sexuality for women with a gynaecological cancer: Starting a Conversation

Palliative care:

Palliative care is specialised care and support provided for someone living with a life threatening illness. Importantly, palliative care also involves care and support for family and caregivers. The goal of palliative care is to improve quality of life for patients, their families and caregivers by providing care that meets needs such as physical (including treatment of pain and other symptoms), emotional, social, cultural and spiritual.

To find your local palliative care service, you can search by postcode at [Palliative Care Victoria](#)

Resources:

[BreaCan Resource Library Gynaecological Cancer Recommended Resources](#)

[Resilience](#) : a free resource for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer, their partners, family and friends. Includes support DVD and an informative guide to diagnosis, treatment and living well. Order [on line](#) or call 1300 660 334.

[Cancer – how are you travelling? Understanding the social and emotional impact of cancer.](#) - booklet

Understanding Gynaecological Cancer – DVD, Cancer Council Queensland 2005

Arrest the Silent Killer: Surviving Ovarian Cancer, a guide and memoir
Marion Seferth, 2004

The Gynaecological Cancer Guide - Sex, Sanity & Survival Margaret Heffernan and Professor Michael Quinn, 2004

The Human Side of Cancer : Living with Hope; Coping with Uncertainty
Jimmie Holland and Sheldon Lewis, 2000

*All these titles are available to loan from BreaCan Resource Library (posted anywhere in Victoria – phone 1300 781 500.

ENTITLEMENTS AND FINANCES

[Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#)

[What Medicare Covers](#)

[Chronic Disease Management – Medicare](#) Access to Medicare rebates for some allied health services

[Mental Health – better access to psychologists – Medicare](#) Access to Medicare rebate for counselling via a psychologist

[Centrelink](#) information on entitlements and Carers Allowance

[Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme \(VPTAS\)](#) Subsidises the travel and accommodation costs incurred by rural Victorians, and if appropriate, their escorts, who have no option but to travel a long distance to received approved medical specialist services.

[Early release of Superannuation](#)

[Cancer Council Victoria Financial Planning Referral Service](#) AMP financial planners can assist with cancer-related financial issues such as early access to superannuation or insurance benefits, dealing with mortgage hardship and advising on Centrelink, debt management and budgeting. This service is free for people who qualify via a means test. If you don't qualify for free help, paid assistance is available. Call Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 to be referred.

[Cancer, work and you](#) A booklet for employees and self-employed people with cancer, and working carers. It contains information about how cancer can affect your ability to work, tips about working during treatment and recovery, and information about your rights and entitlements. There are also suggestions for people trying to balance employment and caring duties

[Work, Welfare, Wills](#) website of the Chronic Illness Alliance. Also includes information on travel insurance. Phone (03) 9882 4654

GENERAL CANCER INFORMATION

[iheard](#) is a new myth-busting website launched by Cancer Council where the public can post questions about cancer with links to videos or articles and experts will give evidence-based answers.

[Forgotten Cancers Project](#) A project focusing on the causes of the less common cancers, including uterine cancer.

[Respecting Patient Choices](#) Advance care planning aims to keep you involved in your medical decisions, both now and in the future, whether you are healthy or have an illness.

[canSpeak](#) – canSpeak aims to provide a unified, independent voice for all people affected by cancer. It provides a forum for people touched by cancer to share issues, ideas and experiences that are

common across all cancer types. canSpeak is a national consumer advocacy group that also has links with consumer advocacy groups at state level.

[Hats, Scarves, Wigs](#) Both BreaCan and Ovarian Cancer Australia have a list of retailers and wig libraries in Victoria. Call or email for further information.

Cancer Council Victoria offers people undergoing cancer treatment the opportunity to be fitted with a free [wig](#), regardless of where they're receiving treatment across Victoria. Located at the Cancer Council Victoria offices in Carlton (corner of Rathdowne and Victoria St) women are encouraged to call 13 11 20 to make an appointment between 9am and 4pm with one of the cancer nurses who can find and fit a wig that may give patients a greater sense of self-confidence during and after cancer treatment.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Ovarian Cancer Australia [Family and Friends Support](#)

[BreaCan Resource Library – Parenting and Partners](#)

[Mensline Australia](#) A national telephone support, information and referral service for men. The service is available from anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is staffed by paid professional counsellors, experienced in men's issues. Phone 1300 789 978

[Carers Victoria](#) Improving health, wellbeing, resilience and economic security of caring families. Phone 1800 242 636



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