

*“View your health
as an investment,
not an expense”*

- John Quelch

In this month's newsletter:

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Fact & Tip of the month



Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Did you know that prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer to affect males in the UK? According to Cancer Research UK, over 48,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year and Prostate Cancer UK state that 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed in their lifetime.

But what is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer can develop when cells in the prostate start to grow in an uncontrolled way.

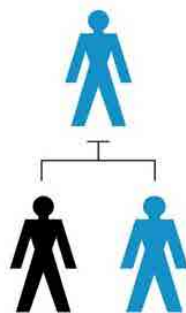
Some prostate cancer grows too slowly to cause any problems or affect how long you live. Because of this, many men with prostate cancer will never need any treatment.

But some prostate cancer grows quickly and is more likely to spread. This is more likely to cause problems and needs treatment to stop it spreading.

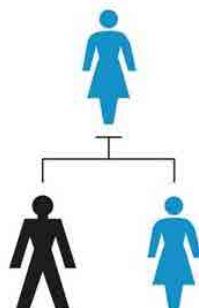
What are the risk factors?

Family history and genes

You are two and a half times more likely to get prostate cancer if your **father** or **brother** has been diagnosed with it, compared to a man who has no relatives with prostate cancer.



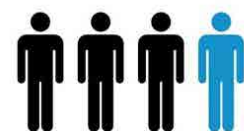
Your risk of getting prostate cancer may also be higher if your **mother** or **sister** has had breast cancer.



Over 50 years old

Prostate cancer mainly affects men over 50 and **your risk increases with age**. The most common age for men to be diagnosed with prostate cancer is between 65 and 69 years.

Ethnicity



Black men are more likely to get prostate cancer than other men, and at a younger age.

In the UK, about 1 in 4 black men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime. If you are a black man, your risk may increase once you're over 45.

Source: <https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information/are-you-at-risk/infographic-what-is-my-risk>

What are the symptoms?

It's important that men are aware of the possible warning signs of prostate cancer.

These can include:

- Frequent urination
- Weak or interrupted urine flow, or the need to strain to empty the bladder
- The urge to urinate frequently at night
- Blood in the urine
- Blood in the seminal fluid
- Discomfort or pain when sitting

How to get tested for prostate cancer

There's no single test for prostate cancer however, the most used tests are:

- Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test
- Digital Rectal Examination (DRE)
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan

At **Healthy Performance** we support hundreds of businesses with their wellbeing strategy through our range of health and wellbeing services, including PSA testing. Our PSA tests are available to those aged 40 or over within our onsite employee health assessments and are quick, easy, and painless for the participant.

The process involves one of our trained healthcare professionals simply taking a blood sample from the fingertip of an employee, and then sending the blood sample to our laboratory. The results are then provided within two weeks but often much quicker than this.

At one company, we began carrying out Onsite Health Assessments in 2013 and have saved the lives of 13 employees with the early detection of prostate cancer.



Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Ovarian cancer is the 6th most common cancer in females in the UK and according to Cancer Research UK, there are approximately 7,500 new cases in the UK each year.

What is ovarian cancer?

Ovarian cancer is when abnormal cells in the ovary begin to grow and divide in an uncontrolled way. And eventually form a growth (tumour). If not caught early, cancer cells gradually grow into the surrounding tissues. They may spread to other areas of the body.

What are the risk factors?

A long menstrual history

Ovarian cancer is linked to increased ovulations; therefore, a long menstrual history can increase your risk. This includes starting periods earlier, reaching the menopause at a later age and never giving birth.

Age

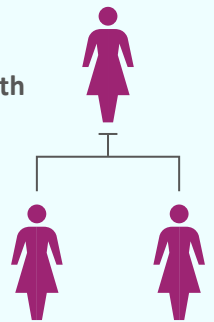
Ovarian cancer has a strong association with age. Currently around 84% of cases are diagnosed in women over the age of 50, and more than half of all cases in women over 65. However, it's important to remember that a women can get ovarian cancer at any age so women of all ages should be symptom aware.

84%

50+

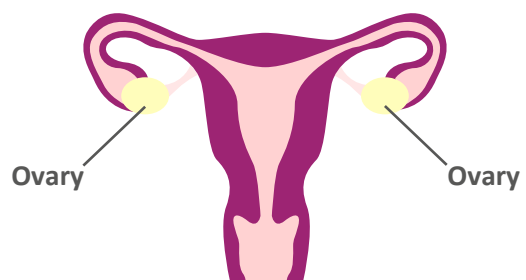
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Hormone replacement therapy

Research shows that using oestrogen-only or combined HRT increases a woman's risk of ovarian cancer. It is thought that only 1% of ovarian cancer cases are linked to HRT use, and women should discuss all risks and benefits with their consultant when making decisions about its use.



Endometriosis

Research shows that women who have endometriosis are at increased risk of ovarian cancer.

How to reduce your risk

Oral contraception: Recent research shows that using the combined oral contraceptive pill can reduce a woman's risk of ovarian cancer for up to 30 years. A woman should always discuss their contraceptive options with their GP and weigh up the risks and benefits.

Giving birth and breast feeding: Both things help to reduce the number of ovulations a woman has during her menstrual cycle and can therefore help reduce risk of ovarian cancer.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle: trying to maintain a healthy body weight through a balanced diet and regular exercise, along with not smoking can help reduce a woman's risk of ovarian cancer.

What are the symptoms?

Ovarian cancer has four main symptoms:

- Persistent stomach pain
- Persistent bloating
- Difficulty eating/feeling full more quickly
- Needing to wee more frequently

These can also be symptoms of other, less serious, conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, ovarian cysts and polycystic ovary syndrome so if you're experiencing them, it doesn't necessarily mean you have ovarian cancer.

Ovarian cancer symptoms might also include back pain, changes in bowel habits (going more often or a lot less), and extreme tiredness for no obvious reason.

How to get tested for ovarian cancer

A blood test and a scan are usually done first, but other tests are often needed to diagnose ovarian cancer. You may have an ultrasound scan to see if there are changes to your ovaries.

Other tests you may have include:

- A CT scan
- Removing a small sample of cells or fluid from your ovaries (needle biopsy)
- Looking at your ovaries using a camera on the end of a tube through a small cut in your tummy (laparoscopy)
- Surgery to remove tissue or possibly your ovaries (laparotomy)



Why should you raise awareness within the workplace?

Well, with the state pension age currently sitting at 66, but rising to 67 by 2028, it is likely that some of your workforce could be affected by either prostate or ovarian cancer.

Raising awareness is all about starting conversation. By starting this conversation, you could be encouraging your employees to get themselves check, or even getting them to speak to their friends and families about their potential risk.

We encourage all workplaces to discuss both types of cancer, amongst many other health concerns with their employees and we've put together some of our top tips in promoting them in the workplace.

- **Utilise awareness months:** there are two national focuses on men's health each year with '**March for Men**' (organised by Prostate Cancer UK) taking place in March and **Movember** taking place annually in November. For Ovarian Cancer there is a national focus in March with the '**Walk in Her Name**' challenge.

Use these campaigns as ice breakers to get the subject being discussed amongst employees and by using a national campaign, employees often feel like they are part of a bigger movement. You can often find free resources on these campaign websites to help with your workplace promotion also.

- To raise awareness all year round, you can **use free resources from the charity Prostate Cancer UK and Ovarian Cancer Action**. Request leaflets on diet and lifestyle, or guides to common problems and place these in staffrooms, canteens or on notice boards around the workplace. To go one step further, you can organise an awareness talk with either charity where a trained volunteer will come along and give a talk directly to your team
- **Ensure full utilisation of your internal communications channels.** You can rotate free resources from either charity, or the Healthy Performance Take 5 library in an email or monthly newsletter to remind employees of the symptoms and the importance of getting themselves checked.

ovarian
cancer **action**



Tip: You know your body best. If you are ever unsure, and have any of the symptoms listed above, don't be afraid to visit your GP and get it checked

Fact: According to Cancer Research UK, healthier diets could prevent around 1 in 20 cancers.