



If you have any concerns about cancer you can talk to one of our specialist nurses on the Cancer Focus NI **FREE** information and support Nurse Line.

**0800 783 3339**

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am - 1pm.  
Calls are **free** and **confidential** from a landline.  
[nurseline@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:nurseline@cancerfocusni.org)

## Ovarian Cancer

In Northern Ireland around 210 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer every year.

### Symptoms of Ovarian Cancer:

- Unexplained bloating
- Feeling full quickly and/or loss of appetite
- Stomach/lower stomach pain
- Needing to pass urine more frequently

### Other symptoms may include:

- Changes in bowel habits
- Extreme fatigue
- Back pain

There is currently no screening programme for ovarian cancer.

**The symptoms outlined in this leaflet are often caused by something less serious and doesn't usually mean it's cancer. However, finding cancer early makes it more treatable.**



Cancer Focus Northern Ireland  
40-44 Eglantine Avenue  
Belfast BT9 6DX

T: 028 9066 3281  
E: [behealthy@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:behealthy@cancerfocusni.org)  
[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)



Charity No: NIC 101307



# Focus on Common Female Cancers



**One in two women in Northern Ireland will develop cancer at some point in their lives. The disease is mainly diagnosed in older women, with nearly nine out of ten cases in those aged 50 and over. When cancer is diagnosed at an early stage, treatment is more likely to be successful. So, finding cancer early can make a real difference. This leaflet will help you to identify the signs and symptoms of some common female cancers.**

## Womb Cancer

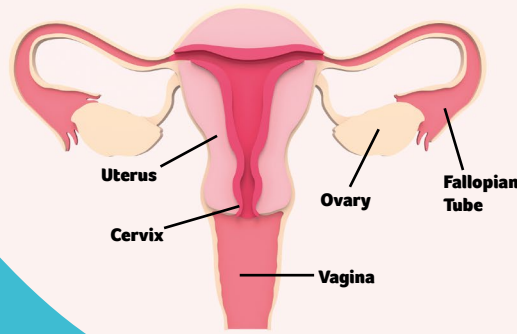
Womb cancer is also known as endometrial or uterine cancer. In Northern Ireland around 260 women are diagnosed with womb cancer every year.

### Symptoms of Womb Cancer:

Unusual bleeding can be one of the first signs of womb cancer. This includes:

- Bleeding after the menopause
- Bleeding between periods or unusual heavy bleeding during period
- Vaginal discharge especially if there is blood present

Other symptoms include pain/discomfort in lower stomach and pain during sex.



## Cervical Cancer

In Northern Ireland just over 80 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year. Most cases of cervical cancer are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and can be largely prevented by:

- The HPV vaccine which is offered to girls and boys aged between 12-13 and can reduce the risk of cervical and other cancers
- Having regular smear tests (cervical screening)

### Symptoms of Cervical Cancer:

- Bleeding after sex
- Bleeding between periods
- Bleeding after the menopause
- Heavy discharge
- Pain or discomfort during sex

### Cervical Screening

A smear test is designed to spot any unusual changes before cancer develops. This is why it is so important to go for your smear test. Women aged 25-50 are invited to cervical screening every three years and every five years between 50-64. The smear test is for cervical cancer only and will not detect ovarian or womb cancer.

**A trip to the doctors could be lifesaving. If in doubt, get it checked out. If it's not serious your mind will be put at rest.**

## Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in Northern Ireland with around 1,450 women diagnosed each year. Over 80% of women diagnosed are over the age of 50. However, whatever age you are it is still important to be breast aware.

### Symptoms of Breast Cancer:

50% of breast cancers are discovered by women themselves. Knowing your breasts and what is normal for you is vital for early detection. Check your breasts regularly by looking and feeling for changes.

### What to look out for:

- A lump
- Thickening of the skin
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Change in shape or size of one breast
- Any unusual sensation/pain/discomfort in a breast
- Veins becoming more visible
- Discharge from the nipple (especially blood stained)
- Inverted nipple
- Persistent rash on the nipple

### Breast Screening

All women between 50 and 70 years are invited every 3 years for free breast screening. If you are over 70, you are still at risk of breast cancer and can book an appointment at your local breast screening unit. If you notice any unusual changes in your breast, please see your GP.

