

Uterine Cancer: Every Woman Needs to Know

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Uterine cancer is a type of cancer that affects the uterus or womb, the hollow organ in a woman's pelvis where fetal development occurs. Also known as endometrial cancer, this disease is caused by abnormal growth of cells in the lining of the uterus. While uterine cancer can occur at any age, it is more common in women who have gone through menopause [1].

In this article, we will discuss the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options for uterine cancer.

The most common symptom of uterine cancer is abnormal vaginal bleeding, which may include:

- Bleeding between periods
- Heavier than usual periods
- Bleeding after menopause
- Bleeding during or after sex
- Other symptoms may include:
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Pain during sex
- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Weight loss

It is important to note that these symptoms may also be caused by other conditions, so it is essential to consult a healthcare provider if you experience any of these symptoms. If uterine cancer is suspected, the healthcare provider will perform a pelvic exam to check for any abnormal growths or masses. The provider may also order imaging tests, such as an ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI, to get a better look at the uterus and surrounding tissues [2].

A biopsy is the definitive way to diagnose uterine cancer. During this procedure, a small sample of tissue is removed from the uterus and examined under a microscope to look for abnormal cells. The treatment for uterine cancer depends on several factors, including the stage of the cancer, the type of cells involved, and the patient's overall health. The main treatments for uterine cancer include surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy.

Surgery is the most common treatment for uterine cancer. Depending on the stage and location of the cancer, the surgeon

may remove the uterus and cervix, as well as nearby lymph nodes and tissues. In some cases, a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) may be necessary.

Radiation therapy involves the use of high-energy X-rays to kill cancer cells. This treatment may be used before surgery to shrink the tumour or after surgery to kill any remaining cancer cells. Chemotherapy uses drugs to kill cancer cells. This treatment may be used if the cancer has spread to other parts of the body [3].

While there is no guaranteed way to prevent uterine cancer, there are some steps you can take to lower your risk. These include:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Exercising regularly
- Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Taking birth control pills, which can lower the risk of uterine cancer
- Limiting or avoiding alcohol consumption

The exact cause of uterine cancer is unknown, but certain factors can increase a woman's risk of developing it. These risk factors include:

Age: Uterine cancer is most common in women over 50.

Obesity: Women who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of developing uterine cancer.

Hormonal imbalances: Women who have high levels of estrogen in their bodies, either from hormone replacement therapy or conditions like polycystic ovary syndrome, are at higher risk of developing uterine cancer.

Family history: Women who have a family history of uterine or colon cancer are at higher risk of developing uterine cancer [4].

Radiation therapy: Women who have received radiation therapy to the pelvis for another cancer have a higher risk of developing uterine cancer.

There is no sure way to prevent uterine cancer, but there are steps women can take to lower their risk, including:

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Received: 28-Feb-2023, Manuscript No. JWH-23-21927; Editor assigned: 01-Mar-2023, PreQC No. JWH-23- 21927(PQ); Reviewed: 16-Mar-2023, QC No. JWH-23-21927; Revised: 20-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. JWH-23- 21927(R); Published: 27-Mar-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2167-0420.23.12.634

Citation: Hiroko H (2023) Uterine Cancer: Every Woman Needs to Know. J Women's Health Care. 12(3):634.

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- Women who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of developing uterine cancer, so maintaining a healthy weight can lower that risk.
- Women who take birth control pills for at least one year have a lower risk of developing uterine cancer.
- Exercise can help lower the risk of uterine cancer by reducing the levels of estrogen in the body.
- Eating a diet that is high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and low in saturated fat can lower the risk of uterine cancer [5].

Uterine cancer is a serious disease that can have significant impacts on a woman's health and well-being. However, with early detection and appropriate treatment, the prognosis for uterine cancer is generally good. If you experience any symptoms of uterine cancer, or if you have concerns about your risk for the disease, speak with your healthcare provider. By working together, you can take steps to prevent, detect, and treat uterine cancer, and improve your overall health and quality of life.

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