

Did you know?

- λ HIV rates among injection drug users in central Bangladesh are approaching concentrated epidemic levels.
- λ No changes are seen in Hepatitis C or syphilis rates among drug injectors over the years.
- λ HIV in other vulnerable groups remains under 1 per cent.
- λ Syphilis rates are still high among sex workers, although declining among some groups.

What you need to know about ovarian cancer

The diagnosis of ovarian cancer brings with it many questions and a need for clear understanding.

The ovaries
The ovaries are a pair of organs in the female reproductive system. They are located in the pelvis, one on each side of the uterus (the hollow, pear-shaped organ where a baby grows). Each ovary is about the size and shape of an almond. The ovaries have two functions: they produce eggs and female hormones (chemicals that control the way certain cells or organs function). Every month, during the menstrual cycle, an egg is released from one ovary in a process called ovulation. The egg travels from the ovary through the fallopian tube to the uterus. The ovaries are also the main source of the female sex hormones estrogen and progesterone. These hormones influence the development of a woman's breasts, body shape, and body hair. They also regulate the menstrual cycle and pregnancy.

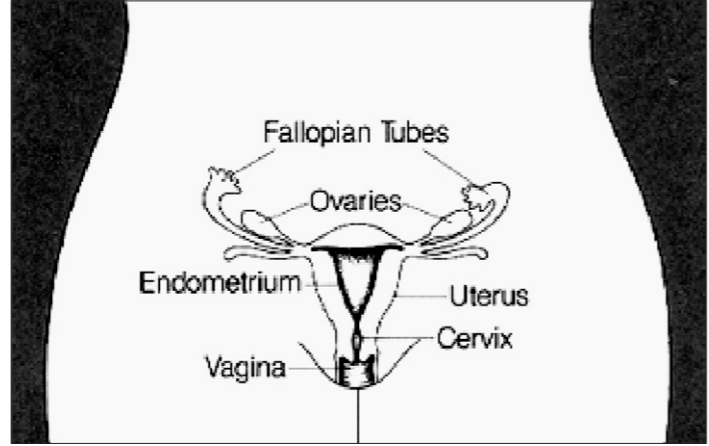
Understanding ovarian cancer
A malignant (cancerous) tumor that begins in the ovaries is called ovarian cancer. There are several types of ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer that begins on the surface of the ovary (epithelial carcinoma) is the most common type. Ovarian cancer cells can break away from the ovary and spread to other tissues and organs in a process

called shedding. When ovarian cancer sheds, it tends to seed (form new tumors) on the peritoneum (the large membrane that lines the abdomen) and on the diaphragm (the thin muscle that separates the chest from the abdomen). Fluid may collect in the abdomen. This condition is known as ascites. It may make a woman feel bloated, or her abdomen may look swollen. Ovarian cancer cells can also enter the bloodstream or lymphatic system (the tissues and organs that produce and store cells that fight infection and disease). Once in the bloodstream or lymphatic system, the cancer cells can travel and form new tumors in other parts of the body.

Ovarian cancer: Who's at risk?

The exact causes of ovarian cancer are not known. However, studies show that the following factors may increase the chance of developing this condition:

- λ **Family history:** First-degree relatives (mother, daughter, sister) of a woman who has had ovarian cancer are at increased risk of developing this type of cancer themselves. The likelihood is especially high if two or more first-degree relatives have had the disease. The risk is somewhat less, but still above average, if other relatives (grandmother, aunt, cousin) have had ovarian cancer. A family history of breast or colon cancer is also



associated with an increased risk of developing ovarian cancer.

- λ **Age:** The likelihood of developing ovarian cancer increases as a woman gets older. Most ovarian cancers occur in women over the age of 50, with the highest risk in women over 60.
- λ **Childbearing:** Women who have never had children are more likely to develop ovarian cancer than women who have had children. In fact, the more children a woman has had, the less likely she is to develop ovarian cancer.
- λ **Personal history:** Women who have had breast or colon cancer may have a greater chance of developing ovarian cancer than women who have not had breast or colon cancer.
- λ **Fertility drugs:** Drugs that cause a woman to ovulate may

slightly increase a woman's chance of developing ovarian cancer. Researchers are studying this possible association.

- λ **Talc:** Some studies suggest that women who have used talc in the genital area for many years may be at increased risk of developing ovarian cancer.
- λ **Hormone replacement therapy (HRT):** Some evidence suggests that women who use HRT after menopause may have a slightly increased risk of developing ovarian cancer.

As we learn more about what causes ovarian cancer, we may also learn how to reduce the chance of getting this disease. Some studies have shown that breast feeding and taking birth control pills (oral contraceptives) may decrease a woman's likelihood of developing ovarian cancer. These factors decrease the

Gynecological surgery reduce cancer risk

Gynecological surgery can substantially reduce the risk of ovarian cancer in women at high risk for the condition, according to new research. Researchers say the magnitude of the risk reduction depends upon the type and extent of surgery. Ovarian cancer has the highest fatality rate of all gynecological cancer and few preventive or screening options. One of the strong predictors of developing ovarian cancer is a family member who has been diagnosed with the disease. Researchers also found tubal ligation and hysterectomy were associated with a 30 percent to 50 percent reduced risk of ovarian cancer. The risk rate was dependent on the type of surgery with surgery to remove some ovarian tissue associated with the greatest risk reduction.

Source: <http://www.ivanhoe.com/newsalert/>

number of times a woman ovulates, and studies suggest that reducing the number of ovulations during a woman's lifetime may lower the risk of ovarian cancer. Women who have had an operation that prevents pregnancy (tubal ligation) or have had their uterus and cervix removed (hysterectomy) also have a lower risk of developing ovarian cancer. In addition, some evidence suggests that reducing the amount of fat in the diet may lower the risk of developing ovarian cancer. Women who are at high risk for ovarian cancer due to a family history of the disease may consider having their ovaries removed before cancer develops (prophylactic oophorectomy). This procedure usually, but not always, protects women from developing ovarian cancer. The risks associated with this surgery and its side effects should be carefully considered. A woman should discuss the possible benefits and risks with her doctor based on her unique situation.

Detecting ovarian cancer
The sooner ovarian cancer is detected and treated, the better a woman's chance for recovery. But ovarian cancer is hard to detect early. Many times, women with ovarian cancer have no symptoms or just mild symptoms until the disease is in an advanced stage. Scientists are studying ways to detect ovarian cancer before symptoms develop. They are exploring the usefulness of measuring the level of CA 125, a substance called a tumor marker, which is often found in higher-than-normal amounts in the blood of women with ovarian cancer.

Recognizing symptoms
Ovarian cancer often shows no obvious signs or symptoms until

late in its development. Signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer may include:

- λ General abdominal discomfort and/or pain (gas, indigestion, pressure, swelling, bloating, cramps)
 - λ Nausea, diarrhea, constipation, or frequent urination
 - λ Loss of appetite
 - λ Feeling of fullness even after a light meal Weight gain or loss with no known reason
 - λ Abnormal bleeding from the vagina
- These symptoms may be caused by ovarian cancer or by other, less serious conditions. It is important to check with a doctor about any of these symptoms. To help find the cause of symptoms, a doctor evaluates a woman's medical history. The doctor also performs a physical examination and asks for diagnostic tests. Some examination and tests that may be useful like pelvic exam, ultrasound, CA-125 assay, X-ray of colon and rectum, CT scan, biopsy etc.
- The importance of follow-up care.**
Follow-up care after treatment for ovarian cancer is important. Regular checkups generally include a physical check up, as well as a pelvic check up and Pap test. The doctor also may perform additional tests such as a chest x-ray, CT scan, urinalysis, complete blood count, and CA-125 assay. In addition to having follow-up exams to check for the return of
- ovarian cancer, patients may also want to ask their doctor about checking them for other types of cancer. Women who have had ovarian cancer may be at increased risk of developing breast or colon cancer. In addition, treatment with certain anti-cancer drugs may increase the risk of second cancers, such as leukemia.
- Emotional support**
Living with a serious disease is challenging. Apart from having to cope with the physical and medical challenges, people with cancer face many worries, feelings, and concerns that can make life difficult. They may need help coping with the emotional aspects of their disease. In fact, attention to the emotional burden of having cancer is often a part of a patient's treatment plan. The support of the health care team (doctors, nurses, social workers), support groups, and patient-to-patient networks can help people feel less isolated and distressed and can improve the quality of their lives. Cancer support groups provide an environment where cancer patients can talk about living with cancer with others who may be having similar experiences.
- Source: <http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinfo/wyntk/ovary>

Feeling dizzy? Check out your problems

DR TRISHA MACNAIR
Feeling dizzy is a fairly universal human experience, but we all tend to mean slightly different things when we say that we feel dizzy. Some people may be describing a sense of light-headedness, while others simply mean that they feel wobbly on their feet. They may have a feeling that the room is whirling around (although this is more properly called vertigo, especially if accompanied by nausea and vomiting). But quite what dizzy is describing is not that important because the symptom itself does not pinpoint one particular problem. Instead it may be a feature of a huge and varied range of medical problems.



sweaty or shaky and fall to the floor unconscious in a faint which should last no more than a couple of minutes before they come round. There may be symptoms of an infection - such as a fever, headache or sore throat - or of anaemia - such as tiredness and paleness.

How is it diagnosed & treated?
In most cases dizziness is not a sign of major illness and it may resolve if the child is given food and allowed to sit down in the fresh air (or with a window open). If the child has a viral infection they can be given paracetamol to bring down fever and encouraged to lie down and rest. If you suspect absences, talk to your doctor who will be able to help you establish the diagnosis, although specific treatment (other than reassurance) is rarely needed.

Viral infection is one of the commonest causes
Viral infections are one of the commonest causes of dizziness, possibly because they, or the fever they induce, can upset the brain and nervous system. If the virus causes a respiratory infection which affects the air passages in the lung, or the ear, then dizziness may be the result of a disruption of the inner ear. In labyrinthitis, the fluid-filled canals in the inner ear which play a vital part in control of balance, become inflamed. This leads to dizziness and, in severe cases, vomiting and fainting, whenever the head is moved.

Low blood pressure can make you dizzy
If your normal blood pressure tends to be low, you are more likely to suffer with dizzy spells. Many attacks of dizziness are caused by momentary (and quite harmless) drops in blood pressure, which causes a very transient reduction in the blood supply to the brain. This typically happens when someone gets up suddenly from a sitting or lying position, when it is known as postural or orthostatic hypotension. Postural hypotension may be aggravated by certain medications, especially some of the medicines used to control high blood pressure.

Getting worried about being dizzy can make you dizzy!
Another common cause of repeated dizzy spells, especially in younger people is anxiety and



panic attacks, especially when accompanied by hyperventilation. In this condition the person over-breathes because of anxiety. This causes changes in the body chemistry, which lead to symptoms such as tingling fingers, headache and dizziness. It can become a vicious circle of symptoms and anxiety. Many people don't even realise that they have anxiety which is making them hyperventilate.

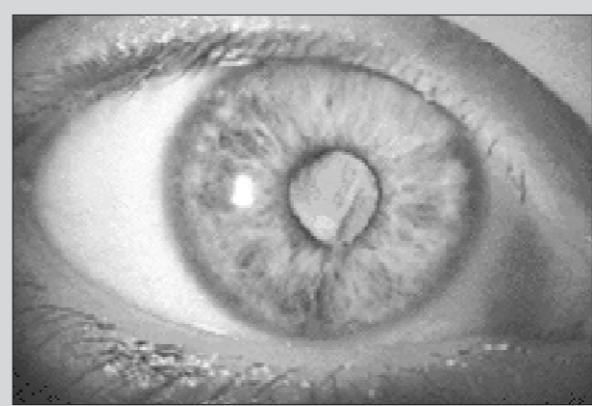
Check blood sugar levels
Another thing to look out for when someone has dizzy spells is a low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia). This is easily tested for and remedied by eating some sugary food. Other rarer causes of dizziness include many drug treatments, migraine, abnormal heart rhythms, stress and simple tiredness, anaemia, acute intoxication by alcohol or drugs, carbon monoxide poisoning (from a blocked flue).

Warning signs of more significant problems
In the majority of cases dizziness is little more than a minor annoyance. But there are a few warning signs that there may be a more serious underlying problem. The most important one is loss of consciousness. If someone complains of feeling dizzy on several occasions and then passes out, they should be seen by a doctor. It may be a simple faint that can be easily explained. But if this happens more than once it is especially important to get it checked over.

Further help
If dizziness persists without an obvious cause, get medical advice. If the child loses consciousness and does not come round within a couple of minutes, or if their breathing seems slow or irregular, or if dizziness leads to a seizure get urgent medical help.

Source: BBC health

Treatment of cataract derived from the Qur'an



Cataract is a common problem in old age. Operation was the only treatment for cataract until an Egyptian doctor Abdul Basit Muhammad invented a medicine to cure the disease derived from Quran.

A number of Swiss pharmaceutical companies have started producing a new medicine called "Medicine of Quran" which allows the treatment of cataract without surgery. As the newspaper Ar-Raya, published in Qatar writes, "this drug, which was synthesised by an Egyptian doctor Abdul Basit Muhammad from the secretions of human sweat glands and has an effectiveness of 99 per cent with absolutely no side effects, was registered in Europe and the United States. It is also reported that one of the Swiss companies produces the new drug in the form of liquid and eye drops. The source of inspiration is Surah (chapter) Yusuf. Dr Abdul Basit Muhammad emphasised that he obtained his inspiration from Surah Yusuf and said: "Once in the morning, I was reading Surah (chapter) Yusuf. My attention lingered over the 84th and successive ayats (verses). "Go with this shirt of mine, and cast it over the face of my father, he will become clear-sighted, and bring to me all your family" (Qur'an 12:93) They tell that Prophet Yakub who was mourning his son Yusuf (peace be upon them) in sadness and grief got his eyes turned white and later when people cast over the sorrowful father's face, the shirt of his son Yusuf, vision returned to him and he was able to see again. Here I started pondering. What could be there in the shirt of Yusuf? Finally I arrived at the decision that nothing except sweat could be on it. I concentrated my thoughts over the sweat and its composition. Then I proceeded to the laboratory for research. I carried out a series of experiments on rabbits. The results turned out to be positive. Later I performed treatment on 250 patients by administering the drug twice a day for two weeks. Finally I

achieved 99 per cent success and said to myself: "This is the miracle of the Qur'an" Dr Abdul Basit Muhammad presented the results of his research to appropriate institutions in Europe and the United States dealing with patenting of new discoveries for consideration. After tests and research were performed, he finalised a contract with a Swiss company on the production of the medicine on the condition that the package should clearly mention-"Medicine of Quran." In the words of the Egyptian scientist, the company accepted his condition and started producing the new drug. (Courtesy-Ar-Raya, Qatar) Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'an-e-Kareem: We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy to those who believe (QURAN 17:82) Protection against blindness: Recite three times morning and evening: "Subhaanallaahil- azeemi wa bihamdihi wala hauwla wala quwwata illa billaah" : "Pure and sublime is Allah. The Mighty and Praise belongs only to Him. There is no Power to save from sins, nor strength to accomplish good but with the Help of Allah." (From: "Morning & Evening Duas") Strengthening the eye-sight (from Qur'an): Recite this verse three times after every salaah (prayer) for strengthening of eye-sight: "Laqad kunta fie ghafalim min haadha fakashafna anka ghita-aka fabasurakal hadeed": "(It will be said) Thou wast heedless of this, now We have removed thy veil, And sharp is thy sight this day!" (From: "Remedies from the Holy Qur'an.")

Source: <http://www.islamicvoice.com/january,2002/opinion.htm#Oe>

Clarification

In our last issue of the Star Health we mistakenly printed the name of the programme officer of residential rehabilitation centre of APON as Khurshid Mohammad. The actual name of the programme officer should read Humayun Kabir. We regret the mistake.