



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Raising Awareness of Ovarian Cancer

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE September 21, 2018

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

This year alone, more than 22,000 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer. It is now the fifth leading cause of cancer death in women in the United States. That is partly because most women do not know they have it until it is too late.

The unfortunate reality of ovarian cancer—which affects one out of 78 women—is that there is no screening test for it. That is why it is so important to raise awareness of this cancer as often as we can, including September, which is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

Early discovery of ovarian cancer is the most critical aspect in one's ability to beat it. Women who are diagnosed in the beginning stages have a five-year survival rate of 93 percent. Symptoms, like bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, fatigue, an upset stomach and heartburn and weight loss are all signs that could point to ovarian cancer. Those who believe they are suffering from these symptoms—often times for several weeks—should see a doctor as soon as possible.

Women who have an increased risk of ovarian cancer, include those who have a family history of the disease, a personal history of cancer, are older than 55, have never been pregnant or have taken menopausal hormonal replacement therapy.

Across the nation, doctors are currently conducting clinical trials and researching ways to detect and treat ovarian cancer. In addition, there are efforts to raise ovarian cancer awareness—like wearing the color teal or raising money for research.

In recent years, I have been proud to team up with Oswego Health to host special events highlighting the importance of protecting women's health and specifically, the prevention and treatment of breast and ovarian cancers. The events included educational information, including panels of medical experts who answered questions on symptoms, screenings and treatments of breast and ovarian cancers.

These events allowed for significant progress in not only helping women understand their own personal health, but also connecting them with medical professionals and other women who can offer their support and personal stories of their battles with cancer.

This month and every month, join me in continuing to raise awareness of ovarian cancer and working together to help all women protect their health. For more information on ovarian cancer, including more details on symptoms and steps you can take to protect yourself, please click [here](#).