

Endometrial Cancer

8,500 Canadian women developed endometrial cancer in 2023.¹

82% of Canadian women diagnosed with endometrial cancer will survive at least 5 years.⁴

Risk Factors

- Estrogen-only HRT
- High number of menstrual periods
- No history of pregnancy
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Obesity
- PCOS
- Diabetes
- Tamoxifen

There is a common misconception that intrauterine devices (IUDs) increase your risk of endometrial cancer. It's important to note that the opposite is true - studies have shown IUDs may have a protective effect against developing endometrial cancer.³

Symptoms

Abnormal vaginal bleeding

- Changes in menstruation
- Bleeding in-between periods
- Bleeding or spotting after menopause

Abnormal vaginal discharge

- Foul-smelling or 'pus-like'
- Blood tinged

What is endometrial cancer?

Uterine cancer is the most common cancer of the female reproductive system. This cancer begins in the cells of the uterus or 'womb' and most commonly affects the endometrium (endometrial carcinoma) but can also affect other surrounding parts of the uterus (uterine sarcoma).

This fact sheet we will focus on endometrial cancer, as it accounts for 95% of all uterine cancers.²

The lining of the uterus is called the endometrium – this is the tissue that sheds every month to form a period in menstruating women. Endometrial cancer or 'carcinoma' occurs when the cells that make up the uterine lining undergo a malignant change.

The link to estrogen exposure

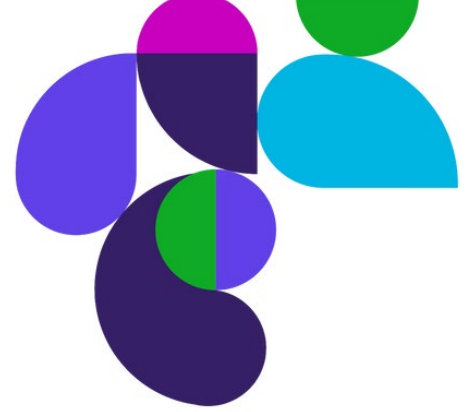
Endometrial cancer, along with breast and ovarian cancer are very closely linked with unopposed estrogen exposure. The more estrogen your body has been subjected to, the higher your risk of developing these cancers. There are certain estrogen related risk factors that are out of your control; for example, there is a transient rise in estrogen with every monthly period, this means women who start menstruating at a young age or reach menopause at a later age will have a greater estrogen exposure. Other factors can be controlled, such as estrogen-only HRT use.

Pain

- Pain during sex
- Painful urination or bowel movements
- Pain or pressure in the pelvis or lower abdomen

Other symptoms

- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite



Diagnosis

If your symptoms are consistent with endometrial cancer, your doctor may refer you for a transvaginal ultrasound. This test is especially important for visualizing the endometrium for signs of cancer.

Further initial testing for endometrial cancer include hysteroscopy, a camera test similar to an endoscopy that helps visualize the uterus, and biopsy of endometrial tissue.

90% of endometrial cases first present with postmenopausal bleeding.²

How can Teladoc Health help?

If you have been diagnosed with endometrial cancer and would like a second opinion on treatment options, our Expert Medical Opinion service can locate a specialist to review your case.

Our Mental Health Navigator services can help you find mental health resources in your community to support you through your cancer journey.

This guide is not meant to provide medical advice or service and should not be construed as the professional advice of Teladoc Health. As such, Teladoc Health does not guarantee or assume responsibility for the correctness of the information or its applicability regarding any specific factual situation. Personal health problems should be brought to the attention of physicians and appropriate health care professionals.

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1 "Canadian Cancer Statistics 2023." Canadian Cancer Society, Government of Canada, cdn.cancer.ca/-/media/files/research/cancer-statistics/2021-statistics/2021-pdf-en-final.pdf. Accessed 5 Jan. 2024.

2 Canadian Cancer Society. "Uterine Cancer." Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Cancer Society, cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/cancer-types/uterine. Accessed 5 Jan. 2024.

3 Minalt, Nicole, et al. "Association between intrauterine device use and endometrial, cervical, and Ovarian Cancer: An expert review." American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, vol. 229, no. 2, 2023, pp. 93–100, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2023.03.039>.

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