

Ovarian Cancer: Build a Winning Treatment Team

If there is a diagnosis or strong suspicion of ovarian cancer, immediately go find a board certified gynecologic oncologist. This is a gynecologist who has undergone years of extra training and examinations to become board certified in the care of women with gynecologic cancers. This includes performing surgery, giving chemotherapy and recommending whether or not radiation is required. Note that radiation is rarely used in ovarian cancer treatment. A board eligible oncologist who has completed fellowship training is an option as well. This means they have completed training, but are required to practice a few years before being allowed to take the final board certification exam. These energetic, recently trained oncologists are usually in practice with more senior physicians so you will often receive team based care in such private or University practices. If you are under the care of a gynecologic oncologist who does not inspire confidence or does not present some kind of positive outlook, go find another one. This is not to say that they should be painting a rose garden picture. However, it is reasonable to expect your main physician to be objective but encouraging if at all possible. The treatment is hard and the outcome may not always be the best, but you do have a fighting chance and you should feel that your gynecologic oncologist is in your corner, providing personal attention and state-of-the-art information throughout. Do not let anyone, including friends, family physicians, general gynecologists, surgical oncologists, medical oncologists, or any other doctor convince you that their team is just as good in the absence of a gynecologic oncologist. You absolutely, positively need a gynecologic oncologist as part of your team!! Again, do not let anyone convince you otherwise.

About the Author

Features admissions, news, teaching, research, hospital, and continuing.

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