September is Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month (GCAM)

GCAM TOOLKIT
Obesity and Endometrial Cancer

foundationforwomenscancer.org
July 2014
Dear Friends and Colleagues:

September is just around the corner. The Foundation for Women’s Cancer is sharing its annual Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month (GCAM) Toolkit to again assist you in planning your events.

Last year’s GCAM message focused on uterine cancer, the most common gynecologic cancer and fourth most common cancer in general in the United States. In March 2014, the Society of Gynecologic Oncology published an Obesity Toolkit that provides a brochure for women, “Obesity and Endometrial Cancer.” This year’s GCAM awareness effort is directed toward helping women understand the link between obesity and endometrial cancer, making knowledge about the prevention, risks and symptoms even more important for this group of women.

The World Health Organization defines obesity as “abnormal or excessive fat accumulation the impairs health.” Obesity is the second largest preventable cause of death behind cigarette smoking. While we don’t yet fully understand why obesity is linked to risk for endometrial cancer, it is thought that the increase in estrogen levels could be a factor since estrogen is known to make some cancers grow. Other conditions common among obese women, such as inflammation and insulin production, also may be linked to cancer development.

In addition to endometrial cancer, obesity also has been linked to ovarian, breast and colon cancers. Women who are 50 lbs. overweight are 10 times more likely to get endometrial cancer.

The GCAM Toolkit may also be viewed and printed in the Educational Materials section of our website.

Since 1999, when the Foundation for Women’s Cancer first declared September as Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month, hundreds of thousands of women have learned about these “below the belt cancers” and sought earlier diagnosis based upon information about prevention, risk and symptoms.
The Foundation for Women’s Cancer’s message for September 2014 Gynecologic Cancer Month is LEARN, LISTEN, ACT about endometrial cancer prevention, risks, symptoms and steps for the earliest diagnosis.

**LEARN**

about the risk factors and symptoms of uterine/endometrial cancer.

**LISTEN**

to your body.

**ACT**

to reduce your risk by managing your weight, among other steps; and seek care first from a gynecologic oncologist if you suspect or have been diagnosed with a gynecologic cancer.

In 2009, the Foundation created another opportunity to spread the word about these cancers. Again this year, the National Race to End Women’s Cancer will be held the first Sunday in November — November 2, 2014 in Washington, D.C. — to unite to raise awareness and research funding on behalf of all women who have been diagnosed with a gynecologic cancer, and to honor those who have lost their lives to these diseases. Please join the movement by visiting endwomenscancer.org. While everyone is invited to participate in the 5K/1 mile walk in Washington, D.C., there also is an option to join virtually and form a team, or simply to register or donate. Every registration and donation supports the movement.

If you have questions about the race, please contact Catherine MacDonald at 571.484.4511 or macdonaldcs8@gmail.com.

If you need additional resources or information about Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month, please feel free to contact Foundation Headquarters at 312.578.1439 or info@foundationforwomenscancer.org.

We hope this toolkit will be helpful as you promote your own activities during September.

Sincerely,

David M. Gershenson, MD
Chairman, Foundation for Women’s Cancer

Carol L. Brown, MD
Communications Chair, Foundation for Women’s Cancer

[CLICK HERE to visit the Foundation for Women’s Cancer website.]
Steady progress has been made to lessen the burden of gynecologic cancers through research. Of particular promise is better understanding of the risks, symptoms and prevention of the three most prevalent gynecologic cancers: cervical cancer, ovarian cancer and uterine cancer.

During September, Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month, and throughout the year, the Foundation for Women’s Cancer urges increased emphasis on helping women understand the steps that can be undertaken to reduce the risks for these cancers and receive the earliest possible diagnosis through symptom recognition.

This toolkit will outline the facts that women need to know to take advantage of the knowledge we now possess.

CONTENTS

LEARN, LISTEN, ACT
Facts about Uterine/Endometrial Cancer .................. 1
Endometrial Cancer Risk ........................................... 2
Gynecologic Cancer Fact Sheet ............................. 4
Reaching Your Audience Through Traditional Media ...... 5
   Step 1: Create a Media List ...................................... 5
   GCAM 2011 Sample Media Advisory ......................... 6
   GCAM 2011 Sample Press Release ............................ 7
Reaching Your Audience Through Social Media ............ 8
National Race to End Women’s Cancer ...................... 9
Member Activity Form ........................................... 10
Results Form ................................................... 11
GCAM Toolkit Survey ............................................ 12
Materials Order Form .......................................... 13
LEARN, LISTEN, ACT
FACTS ABOUT UTERINE/ENDOMETRIAL CANCER

LEARN

• The most common uterine cancer is endometrial cancer, and it is the most common gynecologic cancer.
• Uterine cancer usually occurs around the time of menopause, but younger women also are at risk.
• There is no screening test for endometrial cancer.
• Note: The Pap test only screens for cervical cancer and DOES NOT screen for uterine cancer.
• Risk factors for endometrial cancer include:
  » Taking estrogen alone without progesterone
  » Obesity
  » Diabetes
  » Hypertension
  » Use of tamoxifen
  » Late menopause (after age 52)
  » Never becoming pregnant
  » A family history of endometrial or colon cancer

LISTEN

LISTEN to your body for these symptoms
• Abnormal vaginal bleeding; younger women should note irregular or heavy vaginal bleeding
• Bleeding after menopause

ACT

• If you experience these symptoms, you should have a biopsy of the endometrium to check for endometrial cancer.
• Note: You can reduce your risk of uterine cancer by taking these steps:
  » Exercise regularly
  » Keep your blood pressure and blood sugar under control
  » Manage your weight
• If you have symptoms of endometrial cancer and receive a positive endometrial biopsy, seek care from a gynecologic oncologist.
With over 52,600 women diagnosed each year, uterine cancer, of which a majority are endometrial cancer, accounts for the fourth most common cause of cancer in women in the United States. Though there are currently no screening tests for endometrial cancer, a majority of patients present with abnormal bleeding, potentially allowing for early detection of the disease.

Furthermore, the identification of high risk factors and the association with endometrial cancer has been well established. These risk factors include a direct correlation with obesity as well as diabetes, tamoxifen use, and family history/genetic predisposition. Therefore, recognizing patients at particularly increased risk for endometrial cancer and counseling all women on symptoms and risk reduction may allow for improved outcomes.

However, assessment of patient awareness and their baseline knowledge in regards to endometrial cancer is unknown. Secondary to the increased availability of resources such as the Internet, patients readily have access to medical information and are often more informed than ever before. However, the quality, interpretation, and understanding of information remain unclear.

In a recent study, a majority of participants were unaware of known risk factors and incorrectly identified smoking as a risk factor. Though it is a risk factor in up to 10% of cases, family history/genetic predisposition was the most frequently identified risk factor.

Two common risk factors, obesity and diabetes, were less frequently reported even though some women in the study were being treated for diabetes.

Similarly to studies on ovarian cancer, participants inaccurately reported that Pap tests were one of the most important tools in the prevention/detection of endometrial cancer. Furthermore, only a minority of participants, less than one fifth of the study population, correctly noted the protective effect of oral contraception. Though it is one of the most common symptoms, vaginal bleeding was identified as a symptom by approximately half of the patients in each group. Furthermore, over 40% of participants in one group stated they did not know any symptoms.

### Endometrial Cancer Risk Factors:

- Estrogen use without progesterone
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Tamoxifen use
- Later age of menopause
- Never becoming pregnant
- Family history
- Obesity
Increasing awareness of symptoms of this, the most common gynecologic cancer, may allow for earlier medical intervention and understanding risk factors may result in employing risk reduction strategies. The role of healthcare providers to counsel women on risk factors may result in the potential to offer risk-reducing behaviors (weight loss, diabetes management, etc) as well as risk assessment (genetic predisposition).

There are opportunities to improve education in women regarding endometrial cancer and healthcare providers should maximize their role, as it is preferred by a majority of women we surveyed, particularly in women at increased risk.

The Foundation hosts the Uterine Cancer Network for Endometrial and Uterine Cancer Survivors (UCaN) to assist women living with a uterine cancer seek increased funding for research and engage in education programs geared toward at-risk women. UCaN Working Group includes clinician researchers and advocates, and assists the Foundation in its efforts to engage in discussions about uterine cancer risk and symptoms.

Women living with endometrial or other uterine cancers are invited to join the UCaN listserv by sending an email to advocacy@foundationforwomenscancer.org.

**DID YOU KNOW THAT**
African American women have a lower incidence rate of endometrial cancer as compared to Caucasian women, but die from the disease at almost twice the rate as Caucasian women.

*SOURCE: Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) Program and the National Center for Health Statistics*
GYNECOLOGIC CANCER FACT SHEET

What are gynecologic cancers?
Gynecologic cancers are the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells originating in the female reproductive organs, including the cervix, ovaries, uterus, fallopian tubes, vagina and vulva.

What causes gynecologic cancers?
There are many factors that cause gynecologic cancers. Medical research has discovered that some classes of genes, called oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes, promote the growth of cancer. The abnormal function of these genes can be acquired (e.g., through smoking, aging, environmental influences) or inherited. Almost all cervical cancers and some cancers of the vagina and vulva are caused by a virus known as HPV, or Human Papillomavirus.

Can gynecologic cancers be prevented?
Screening and self-examinations conducted regularly can result in the detection of certain types of gynecologic cancers in their earlier stages, when treatment is more likely to be successful and a complete cure is a possibility. Diet, exercise and lifestyle choices play a significant role in the prevention of cancer. Additionally, knowledge of family history can increase the chance of prevention or early diagnosis by determining if someone may have a gene which makes them susceptible to cancer.

Who should treat gynecologic cancers?
Gynecologic cancers should be treated by a specialist with advanced training and demonstrated competence, such as a gynecologic oncologist.

A gynecologic oncologist is a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist who has an additional three to four years of specialized training in treating gynecologic cancers from an American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology-approved fellowship program. This subspecialty program provides training in the biology and pathology of gynecologic cancers, as well as in all forms of treatment for these diseases, including surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and experimental treatments.

How are gynecologic cancers treated?
Gynecologic cancers are treated by using one or more of the following: surgery, radiation therapy and/or chemotherapy. The choice of therapy(s) depends on the type and stage of the cancer.

Who is at risk?
Every woman is at risk for developing a gynecologic cancer. It is estimated that about 95,000 women will learn of a gynecologic cancer diagnosis this year and more than 28,700 will die as a result. More than half of all women diagnosed with a gynecologic cancer this year will be diagnosed with endometrial cancer.
REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Step 1: Create a Media List

A basic media list can be created by contacting each local outlet — newspaper, radio or television — to find out who should receive your event information and materials. Blogs and online publications that cover health topics can be found by searching online.

For all outlets, get email addresses and phone numbers, and a contact name if available. News outlets are short-staffed and receive an overload of news, so be as brief as possible.

When constructing the media list, leave space for notes about conversations with reporters in order to keep track of their interest. Learn about special sections (i.e., health sections) or reporters who usually write about cancer, women’s issues, fundraising events and other topics related to GCAM. These individuals will be more apt to promote your event because of their existing interest in the topic. Also, always provide information about how to contact your spokesperson(s) for interviews.

Follow each media outlet’s social media pages to keep up with stories they are covering and to learn which reporters cover health topics. You can “direct tweet” information to specific reporters and media outlets by following them and adding @theirname before your tweets.

Newspapers: Check online or ask local newspapers for the name of their city editor, health/medical reporter, features editor and any “women’s issues” reporter they may have on staff.

- Send materials several weeks in advance of the event.
- Suggest several story angles in a follow-up call.
- Ask for preferences related to use of photos so you can provide appropriate photographs.

Radio: Check online or ask local radio affiliates for the name of their health reporter and news director, or news assignment editor.

- Suggest that the station send a DJ/personality to your event to cover it live from the event location. Such coverage, called a “live remote,” requires advanced notice.
- Ask to be listed and mentioned on their community calendar, and send a brief (20–30 seconds) Public Service Announcement to their PSA contact address.

Television: Check online or call local television stations for the news desk/assignment editor, as well as who to contact to list your event on the community events calendar. Also inquire whether the station has a health/medical reporter or “women’s issues” reporter on staff.

- Provide information about spokesperson(s) who can be interviewed.
- Be aware of the importance of having a visual image for television reporters, especially when discussing a story idea with the station. Events with many people, activities and large props provide good visuals for news programs.

*Important: Call the news desk/assignment editor at 4:00 p.m. (if an evening event) or 9:00 a.m. the day of your event to remind them about it and check if they have it on their assignment calendar. This often leads to being covered, especially on the weekends.*
[Organization] Joins the Foundation for Women’s Cancer in Alerting Women to the Link between Obesity and Endometrial Cancer

WHO: The Foundation for Women’s Cancer and [your organization] will participate in September, Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month by alerting women to the link between obesity and endometrial cancer, and urging them to know the symptoms of endometrial cancer.

[Add a sentence about your event or project to highlight this message. For example: To alert women to the link between obesity and endometrial cancer and to urge them to know its symptoms, [your organization] in partnership with the Foundation for Women’s Cancer will host a [details].

WHAT: Include specific information about your event or project including what it is, names of speakers/presenters, topics that will be covered, interview opportunities for the media.

WHEN: Date and time

WHERE: Address and other information, such as parking and public transportation options, as necessary

WHY: Women who are 50 lbs. overweight are 10 times more likely to get endometrial cancer. Reports have shown that large weight loss will reduce this risk. Obesity is the second largest preventable cause of death behind cigarette smoking.

Endometrial cancer is the most common gynecologic cancer and the fourth most common cancer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact’s name, mobile phone number and email address

[Add information about your organization]

*The Foundation for Women’s Cancer, is dedicated to raising funds for research and training, and increasing public awareness of gynecologic cancer prevention, early detection and optimal treatment. The Foundation will host the National Race to End Women’s Cancer in Washington, DC on Sunday, November 2nd. Visit [endwomenscancer.org](http://endwomenscancer.org) for more information and to register for this event.*

Women should know that bleeding after menopause could be a sign of endometrial cancer and they need to talk with their physician, preferably a gynecologist, about this symptom immediately.
For More Information:
[Your contact name
Mobile phone number
Email address]

[Organization] Joins the Foundation for Women’s Cancer in Alerting Women to the Link between Obesity and Endometrial Cancer

[Insert City], [Insert Date] — The Foundation for Women’s Cancer [foundationforwomenscancer.org] and [your organization] will participate in September, Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month by alerting women to the link between obesity and endometrial cancer, and urging them to know the symptoms of endometrial cancer.

Endometrial cancer is the most common gynecologic cancer and the fourth most common cancer. More than 52,600 will learn of a diagnosis this year alone. It is especially important for women with weight management challenges to know the early warning signs of the cancer. They include: abnormal vaginal bleeding; younger women should note irregular bleeding; and any vaginal bleeding after menopause should be evaluated by a physician, preferably a gynecologist.

Other risks for endometrial cancer include: taking estrogen alone without progesterone; diabetes; hypertension; menopause (after age 52); never becoming pregnant; and a family history of colon cancer or other type of uterine cancer.

Every woman is at risk for developing a gynecologic cancer. An estimated 95,000 new cases will be diagnosed and approximately 29,000 women will die from gynecologic cancers in the US in 2014.

The Foundation for Women’s Cancer first declared September as Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month in 1999. Since then, the Foundation has been joined by organizations throughout the country to bring life-saving messages to women.

During GCAM in September and throughout the year, the Foundation for Women’s Cancer [and your organization] will focus increased emphasis on helping women understand the steps they can take to reduce the risks for these cancers and receive the earliest possible diagnosis through symptom recognition.

##

[Add information about your organization]

The Foundation for Women’s Cancer, is dedicated to raising funds for research and training, and increasing public awareness of gynecologic cancer prevention, early detection and optimal treatment. The Foundation will host the National Race to End Women’s Cancer in Washington, DC on Sunday, November 2nd. Visit foundationforwomenscancer.org for more information and to register for this event.
REACHING YOUR AUDIENCE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

If your organization or event doesn’t already have a social media presence, create one on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. Be consistent with the look, style and feel of each platform to maintain a familiar tone for users. You can also use Pinterest and Instagram to share photos and info-graphics.

Be sure to link everything you send to the media, and everything you prepare and write about your event to your social media pages. Post regular announcements, photos, press releases, reminders, contests and any other information about your event on a regular basis to build excitement and keep your event in the forefront. Create posts that are engaging, enthusiastic and — when possible — interactive.

Display prominent links to your social media sites on your website home page, e-newsletters and email signatures, and send out notices regularly reminding everyone on your mailing list, including your media list, to follow you on Facebook and Twitter, and to connect with you on LinkedIn. This will build your number of followers and increase exposure to your event. Additionally it will expose them to the valuable content your organization cultivates and posts on these sites.

Consider creating and using a hashtag. Hashtags can be used on both Facebook and Twitter, and help promote key terms and ideas. And always use the Foundation’s hashtag, too: #EndWomensCancer.

Be multi-media! Create text posts, share links, post photos, videos, graphics and infographics. Keep material fresh and exciting, and always include a call to action.

Plan posts that resonate with your audiences and solicit feedback. Ask for help in naming some aspect of the event, or have a contest to design your event logo or T-shirt, or create a quiz about GYN cancer facts and give away prizes for the most correct answers. The goal is to get your followers to comment and interact with you to build those relationships. This also shows the media that this event is interesting and important to more than just your organization.

Check your social media sites daily and respond quickly to comments, and connect with other individuals and organizations that “follow” and “like” you. Link to and interact with the social media pages of media outlets and blogs you want to cover your event, so you can see what types of stories they are covering and comment on them. This is an excellent way to develop a relationship with the people who post those stories since they want to build followers and comments, too.

To organize and plan your content, consider creating a social media calendar. The Foundation plans weekly themes for posts. This calendar drives our social media graphics and other content, and encourages variety.

Besides using the #EndWomensCancer hashtag, connect with the Foundation on social media. We can share posts and content and connect followers.
NATIONAL RACE TO END WOMEN’S CANCER

Be part of the Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Movement (GCAM) by participating in the 2014 National Race to End Women’s Cancer in Washington, DC on November 2, 2014. Whether you run the 5K or 1 mile walk/run course, please join the entire gynecologic cancer community in raising awareness and funds to support our cause.

On Saturday, November 1, 2014 there will be a free ovarian cancer survivors course at the W Hotel. For more information on the courses and to register for the race, please visit the National Race to End Women’s Cancer website at endwomenscancer.org.

Can’t make it to DC? You don’t have to be there in person to participate — you can sleep in and still support the cause! Each registration and donation supports the Foundation’s efforts. Of course, we’d love for you to join us for an amazing weekend of education, energy, support and awareness-raising, but the most important thing is to be part of the growing national movement to prevent, detect, treat and defeat reproductive cancers. Movements MATTER.

CLICK HERE for more information or to register for the National Race to End Women’s Cancer

National Race to End Women’s Cancer

GYN Cancer: #EndWomensCancer
MEMBER ACTIVITY FORM

Throughout the month of September, many groups will be organizing activities, events and media relations outreach programs in order to publicize Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month. In an effort to keep track of various activities going on throughout the country, it would be helpful if you would please fill out this form and return it to the Foundation for Women’s Cancer. This will help us keep track of the various events and publicity efforts ongoing throughout September. Send this response form to:

Foundation for Women’s Cancer
Re: Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month
230 W. Monroe, Suite 2528
Chicago, IL 60606
Fax: 312.578.9769
Email: info@foundationforwomenscancer.org

Description of event/activity I am organizing

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Event specifics

Date:

Location:

Time:

Supporting groups:

Sponsoring member information

Advocacy group member name:

Coordinator name:

Address:

Phone:

I will be conducting media relations outreach for my event or about Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month

Yes:

No:
RESULTS FORM

In order to track the amount of media attention given to Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month, please fill out this form after your event or media outreach activities and send it to:

**Foundation for Women’s Cancer**
230 W. Monroe, Suite 2528
Chicago, IL 60606
Fax: 312.578.9769

Please include any copies of articles that may have appeared about your event. Also, when listing media results, please include the name of the publication, the city and the date the article appeared.

**Example: Chicago Tribune, 9/1/14, front page article (attached)**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Description of your event (including how it was organized)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Names of groups that may have contributed to your event or outreach success

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Sponsoring member information

**Advocacy group member name:**

________________________________________________________________________

**Coordinator name:**

________________________________________________________________________

**Address:**

________________________________________________________________________

**Phone:**

________________________________________________________________________
GCAM TOOLKIT SURVEY

To help make the Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month materials as helpful as possible, please let us know what you liked about this year's kit and what you would like to see in the future. Simply complete this survey form and send to:

Foundation for Women’s Cancer
Re: Survey Results
230 W. Monroe, Suite 2528
Chicago, IL 60606
Fax: 312.578.9769

Did you use the GCAM toolkit to plan an event or activity this year?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, was it helpful?

If no, why not?

What did you find most helpful about the GCAM toolkit?

What was least helpful about the GCAM toolkit?

Are there other types of materials you would like to receive to help your GCAM outreach efforts?  If so, please describe these materials.

Please provide any additional feedback about the publicity kit.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey. We appreciate your commitment, time and assistance.
REGISTER TODAY!

2014 NATIONAL RACE TO END WOMEN’S CANCER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

Register today by visiting foundationforwomenscancer.org to enter the National Race to End Women’s Cancer website.

Register as an individual or better yet, form a team!
Can’t make it to Washington? You can STILL register, get a race shirt and help support the cause by joining a virtual team!