



**APTA Oncology**<sup>SM</sup>

An Academy of the American  
Physical Therapy Association

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Student and New  
Professional Subcommittee

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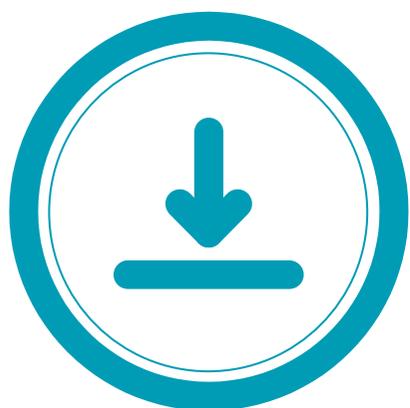


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**Downloads:**

Gynecological

Cancers



# Gynecological Cancers



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## Endometrial

- **Most commonly adenocarcinomas or endometrioid cancers** which start in the gland cells of the endometrium

## Ovarian

- Can be diagnosed as malignant epithelial carcinoma, germ cell tumor, or stromal tumor with the **majority of diagnoses being malignant epithelial carcinomas (85%)**

## Cervical

- **Usually either squamous cell carcinoma or adenocarcinoma** with squamous cell carcinomas developing at the transition zone of the endocervix and exocervix while adenocarcinomas are usually found in the endocervix

## Uterine

- Starts in the muscle and supporting tissues (sarcoma) of the uterus
- Are not nearly as common as endometrial or cervical cancer, and are usually diagnosed as uterine leiomyosarcoma or endometrial stromal sarcoma.

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## Treatments

- **Chemotherapy**
- **Radiation therapy**
- **Surgical resection/reduction/staging**
- **Brachytherapy**

## - Ovarian cancer has non-specific S&S

- Abdominal pain, discomfort, bloating & cramping → assoc. w/ various other diseases
- Later stage diagnosis as a result
- *More specific S&S:*
  - Menstrual irregularity, unintended weight loss, abdominal distention, pleural effusion

## - CDC's 4 common S&S of gynecologic cancer:

- Bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain or pressure, feeling too full too fast, and unusual bleeding

- **Long term s/e:** fatigue, neuropathy, lymphedema, cognitive dysfunction, sexual health concerns, menopausal symptoms

## Clinical Implications

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## Physical Therapist's Role

### Assess

Perform risk factor assessment for suspected gynecological cancer through history taking

### Intervene

Treat long term physical side effects: fatigue, neuropathy, lymphedema, cognitive dysfunction, muscle weakness, functional loss, sexual health concerns

### Screen

Screen for common and specific S&S of gynecological cancers

### Educate

Resources for therapists and patients from the Foundation for Women's Cancer and referral to Pelvic PT when appropriate



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## Takeaways

1

Physical Therapists can aid in the detection of gynecological cancers with an appropriate history and subjective of common and specific S&S

2

Regularly obtain a thorough history and review of systems with patients at risk of gynecological cancers

3

Mitigate long-term physical side effects of gynecological cancer and its treatment

4

Investigate resources or refer to a Pelvic Health Physical Therapist to assist with maintenance of sexual health throughout treatment and into survivorship

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## Resources

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Lokich E. Gynecologic Cancer Survivorship. *Obstet Gynecol Clin North Am*. 2019;46(1):165-178. doi:10.1016/j.ogc.2018.10.002

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Stubblefield, MD. *Cancer Rehabilitation 2E, Principles and Practice*. Springer Publishing Company; 2018.

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<https://www.mdanderson.org/publications/focused-on-health/cancer-symptoms-women.h17-1589046.html>

