



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Raising Awareness of Ovarian and Prostate Cancer

Senator Patty Ritchie

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ISSUE:

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Prostate cancer



Ovarian cancer



Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

In 2019, more than 170,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 22,000 women will be told they have ovarian cancer. In the case of prostate cancer, if detected early enough, there is a 99 percent survival rate. However, ovarian cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer death in women in the United States.

The reason for this imbalance is screening. Prostate cancer can be diagnosed through a biopsy and 95 percent of cases are found before the cancer has spread. Unfortunately, with ovarian cancer—which affects one out of every 78 women—there is no screening test. Many women will not know they have ovarian cancer until it is too late.

September is both Ovarian and Prostate Cancer Awareness Month here in the United States. Raising awareness of these diseases is critical to the survival rate of those who are diagnosed.

With prostate cancer, there are no warning signs, as a tumor can grow without causing any pain. That is why it is so important that all men approaching the age of 50 receive an exam every four years. Ovarian cancer however, has warning signs. Women with long-lasting symptoms such as bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, fatigue, an upset stomach, heartburn and sudden weight loss should see a doctor as soon as possible.

If you have a family history of these cancers, it is recommended that men begin to get exams when they turn 40. Meanwhile, women may have an increased risk of ovarian cancer if there is a family history, a personal history of other cancers, are older than 55, have never been pregnant or have taken menopausal hormonal replacement therapy.

Across the nation this month, doctors, organizations and everyday people are hosting events aimed at raising awareness of these cancers and raising money for research. In addition, medical professionals are currently conducting clinical trials and researching ways to detect and treat ovarian cancer.

This month and every month, join me in continuing to raise awareness of ovarian and prostate cancer and working together to help people protect their health. For more information on Ovarian and Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, as well as more details on steps you can take to protect yourself—and your loved ones—click [here](#).