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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: Body awareness and knowledge of potential symptoms are important for early detection of gynecological cancers.

Gynecological cancers, which include cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal, and vulvar cancers, impact millions of women globally.¹ Early detection and diagnosis significantly enhance treatment effectiveness and survival rates.² Therefore, understanding the symptoms, commonly referred to as early warning signs, is essential for effective detection and management.

Cervical cancer, for instance, ranks among the most prevalent types of gynecological cancers.³ The primary symptoms of cervical cancer include abnormal vaginal bleeding and discharge; and the early symptoms may include pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, and persistent vaginal discharge that is either blood-stained or has an unpleasant odor.⁴ While the symptoms are not exclusive to cervical cancer, being attuned to one's body and monitoring any changes is vital for the early detection of this serious disease.⁵ Healthcare providers typically use Pap tests and HPV screenings as the most reliable methods to confirm the presence of cervical cancer. Previous guidelines recommend initiating screening at the age of 21⁶ while more recent policies suggest Pap tests every three years from 25 to 30 years of age, followed by HPV-based screening every five years from 30 to 65.⁷ Thanks to improvements in HPV screening techniques, now self-sampling for HPV tests is possible. While this does not replace regular screenings by healthcare providers, it offers a convenient alternative for women to collect samples; it is a particularly advantageous option for those uncomfortable with or unable to attend clinic appointments.

Understanding your body and being aware of symptoms also plays a vital role in the early detection of ovarian cancer.⁸ Often referred to as a silent killer, ovarian cancer frequently presents without symptoms in its initial stages.⁹ However, certain common symptoms do exist, and research indicates that increased awareness of these symptoms among women can lead to early diagnosis.¹⁰ Similarly, awareness of symptoms related to uterine or endometrial cancer can serve as a valuable complement to screenings; it enables women to recognize early warning signs prior to undergoing examinations by healthcare providers. Studies have shown that there is a lack of awareness about these symptoms, with 37% of women not recognizing postmenopausal bleeding as an early symptom of endometrial cancer.¹¹

In a nutshell, while it is important and highly recommended that women undergo regular Pap tests, pelvic exams, and other screenings as advised by their healthcare providers, FWHPWI emphasizes that awareness of body signs and knowledge of symptoms play a crucial role in prevention and early detection of gynecological cancers. It is by understanding their bodies and knowing potential warning signs that women can help identify early stages of the gynecological cancers. We therefore advocate that healthcare providers should educate women about the symptoms of the gynecological cancers and elucidate how to monitor bodily changes, while also offering women all the necessary support to facilitate the regular screening for early detection of the cancers.

Dr. F. N. Alaribe Nnadozie
(MD, FWHPWI)

1. Zhu B, et al; Sankaranarayanan, Rajiv & Ferlay, J. 2. Lout JT, Murphy J.; Crosby D, et al 3. WHO; Min Z, et al 4. Mayo Clinic; City of Hope; Emma L, L, et al 5. Githiga J, N, et al; Moodley J, et al; Shiraz A, et al 6. Fontham, E.T., et al 7. Wei W, et al 8. Ofurum O, et al; Black S, S., et al 9. Harvard Health Online; Kanjuga M, et al 10. Gujjar K, et al 11. Krewson C, et al

FWHIPWI EVENTS

Just a few ways to reduce your risk of gynecological cancers advised by the US National Foundation for Cancer Research

► **Have your Pap test by age 21.**

The Pap test looks for abnormal cell changes in the cervix to detect cervical cancer in its early stages.

► **Protect yourself from Human papilloma virus (HPV)**

Talk to your doctor about getting the HPV test and HPV vaccine. Also, limit your sexual partners and, when you do have sex, use a condom.

► **Don't smoke.**

Smoking increases the risk of different cancers including cervical, ovarian, vaginal and vulvar cancers.

► **Make healthy choices.**

It's important to maintain a healthy weight, be active and eat a healthy diet consisting of fruit, vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains.

► **Share your family history with your doctor.**

Genetic testing is now available to see if you carry a *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutation, which could put you in a high-risk category for ovarian and breast cancer. If you carry a genetic mutation associated to Lynch Syndrome, a heredity condition that increases your risk of colon cancer, ovarian cancer, uterine cancer, etc.

► **Contact your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms.**

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Abdominal or back pain
- Bloating
- Changes in bathroom habits (increased urination, constipation, diarrhea)
- Itching or burning of the vulva
- Changes in vulva color or skin (rash, sores, warts, ulcers).

nfc.org/

We successfully held our first outreach/workshop of 2025 on June 7th. The event, entitled “Healthy Living, Healthy You”, featured educational discussions on various health topics, including the benefits and challenges of juice therapy, personalized health counselling, and blood pressure screenings.

In recognition of June as the international month for uterine cancer awareness, we took the opportunity to enlighten participants about uterine cancer, also known as endometrial cancer or womb cancer.

The gathering was truly remarkable, memorable, and filled with meaningful moments inspiring connections.



Below are some photographs that capture the spirit and energy of the event.



Dr FN Alaribe Nnadozie
&
Ms Vutomi Hlungwane
preparing the Juice for
participants

Some participants
of the event

The harm
versus benefit
argument
around cancer
treatment is
complex and not
easily resolved.

But more
harmful than
any drug is not
getting a
diagnosis, or
one early
enough, to give
more people the
luxury of
choice.

www.wits.ac.za/news/

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RESEARCH NEWS

Update Gynecologic Malignancies 2025

There have been major changes in the understanding of gynecologic malignancies in recent years, leading to new therapy options and subsequently to greater responsibilities for every professional treating those patients.

The most significant therapeutic advances were achieved with checkpoint inhibitors (CPI), especially for endometrial and cervical cancer.

[Read more](#)

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the latest issue of
our Magazine

The launch of Global Ovarian Cancer Research Consortium has garnered significant media attention*

The consortium unites four leading organizations across three continents to accelerate lifesaving process through international research collaboration. [Read more](#)

HPV16 and 18 nearly eliminated in vaccinated Danish women but other high-risk types persist

Before HPV vaccination among teenage girls started in Denmark, high-risk HPV was found in all cervical cancers. HPV types 16/18 accounted for around three quarters (74%) of cervical cancers. These two types are covered in the 4-valent HPV vaccine offered to girls since 2008 as well as the 9-valent vaccine which has been in use in Denmark since November 2017. One third (26%) of cervical cancers prior to the HPV immunization campaign were caused by high-risk types that are not covered by the 2- and 4-valent vaccine. [Read more](#)

Hydrogels could be key to safer, smarter cancer drug delivery

Modern cancer therapies have resulted in higher survival rates in many cases. However, their delivery mode and generic action are associated

with greater adverse effects and potentially lower efficacy. A recent review published in *Frontiers in Immunology* analyzed the potential for introducing hydrogels in cancer treatment, which could lead to personalized, more effective, and less toxic drug delivery platforms. [Read more](#)

A review explores the utility of traditional Chinese, Korean, Indian, Japanese, and South African medicines as supportive therapies for conventional cancer treatments.

Major drawback of conventional cancer therapies is the persistence of drug resistance, adverse reactions to chemotherapy, digestive damage, reduced quality of life, and high treatment costs. To address these challenges, researchers have been investigating the utility of using Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) alongside conventional cancer treatments. Some of these CAM approaches have been reported to enhance patients' quality of life and reduce the severity of adverse effects from conventional therapies. [Read more](#)



[Click to join us](#)
[share information about the cancers](#)

Do you know?

A landmark genome-wide association study (GWAS) by Wits University researchers discovered two novel genetic variants linked to breast cancer in black South African women

[Read more](#)

Every year, over 10,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in Tanzania, and more than 6,000 die from the disease

Tanzania has a population of 18.8 million women ages 15 years and older who are at risk of developing cervical cancer. Current estimates indicate that every year 10241 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 6525 die from the disease. Cervical cancer ranks as the 1st most frequent cancer among women in Tanzania and the 1st most frequent cancer among women between 15 and 44 years of age. [Read more](#)

Research shows that an additional year of schooling can increase a woman's chances of getting life-saving cervical cancer screenings by 35% in countries like Lesotho

A new study from San Diego State University found that the number of years a girl spends in school is directly linked to her getting potentially lifesaving cancer screenings as an adult. [Read more](#)

Innovative Public-Private Partnerships Enhance Cancer Care in Africa

In 2025, several African countries are benefiting from innovative public-private partnerships that improve cancer diagnosis and treatment access. Collaborations between

governments, NGOs, and pharmaceutical companies have led to expanded screening programs, affordable medicines, and upgraded radio-therapy infrastructure. For example, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire have introduced financing models that reduce upfront costs for cancer equipment and provide patient support services. These partnerships also focus on healthcare worker training and community education to raise awareness and reduce stigma. Such initiatives are critical to bridging gaps in cancer care and improving survival rates across the continent. [Read more](#)

Researchers at the University of Johannesburg have identified promising medical properties in an unlikely source: the common woolly nightshade (*Solanum mauritianum*), a plant often dismissed as an invasive weed.



Image credit: deepai.org/machine-learning-model/

Their findings, published in *Nature Scientific Reports*, reveal that extracts from the plant's ripe fruit exhibit potent activity against both aggressive brain cancer cells and antibiotic-resistant bacteria. [Read more](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the importance of this practice.



Never forget the practice!

It is necessary for your health now and always. Do it often.

The best for you is to keep safe for yourself and for us all.



GLOBAL CARDIO ONCOLOGY SUMMIT GCOS2025

The **Cardio-Oncology Society of Southern Africa (COSOSA)**, in partnership with the **International Cardio-Oncology Society (IC-OS)**, is excited to announce the **Global Cardio-Oncology Summit (GCOS)**, set to take place from **30 October – 1 November 2025** at the **Century City Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa.**

[Read more](#)

SGO ANNUAL MEETING ON WOMEN'S CANCER

taking place April 10–13, 2026, in San Juan, Puerto Rico

SOCIETY OF GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY (SGO)

Annual Meeting on Women's Cancer stands as the foremost educational and scientific gathering for professionals dedicated to the treatment and care of individuals with gynecologic cancer.

Since 1969, the SGO has hosted this meeting, bringing together global experts in gynecologic oncology to share the latest scientific advancements, participate in educational programs, and network with peers.

[Read more](#)

ICGS 2025 ANNUAL GLOBAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 5-7

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

The first ever global International Gynecological Cancer Society (IGCS) meeting to be held on the African continent, offers a unique opportunity to engage with leading experts in all disciplines involved in gynecologic oncology from around the world.

[Read more](#)

12th World Congress on CANCER RESEARCH AND THERAPY

Jun 29 - 30, 2026

Rome, Italy

Cancer Congress 2026 is now opening a **call for sessions**, aiming to develop a program that brings together the very best of innovation and progress happening across the full spectrum of cancer control, at national, regional and global levels. This is a unique opportunity for cancer experts to share their knowledge and experience with the global cancer community, gain visibility and contribute to advancing cancer control.

The conference will emphasize the theme **“Novel Discoveries in Cancer Research & Treatment**

[Read more](#)

HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE

An Apple a Day

According to studies, several fruits high in antioxidants may help lower cancer risks. These include apples.

The ubiquitous apple is inexpensive, available all year and comes in seemingly endless varieties.

Apples are a good source of fiber and Vitamin C, apples exhibit anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties and contain pectin, a fiber which the bacteria in your gut can use to produce compounds that protect the cells in the colon. [Read more](#)



Image credit: deepai.org/machine-learning-model/

A new report provides a framework for the public to adopt healthy diet and lifestyle patterns based on reliable research

World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International has released a major new report called “Dietary and lifestyle patterns for cancer prevention.” The report was managed by WCRF international in partnership with the American Institute for

for Cancer Research (AICR). [Read more](#)

Exercise ‘better than drugs’ to stop cancer returning after treatment, trial finds

First clear evidence that structured exercise regime reduces risk of dying by a third, can stop tumours coming back or a new cancer developing.

[Read more](#)

Drinking enough water is essential for flushing out toxins and reducing cancer risk

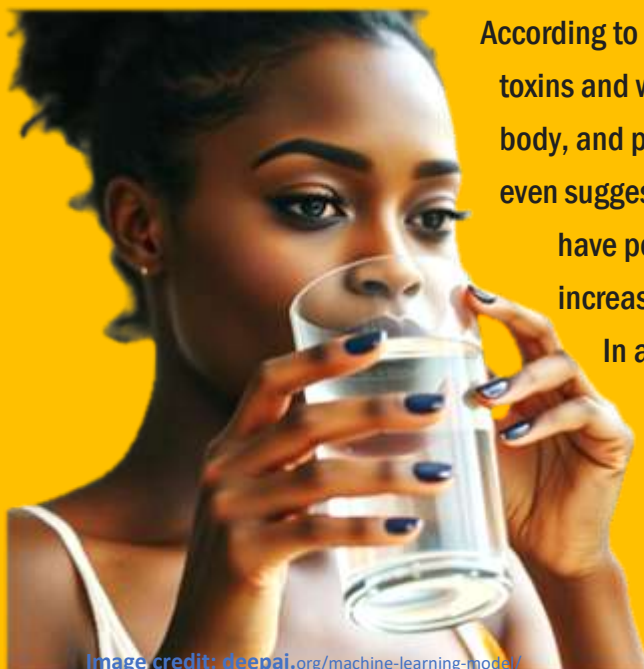


Image credit: deepai.org/machine-learning-model/

According to studies, water plays a crucial role in removing toxins and waste, carrying nutrients and oxygen around the body, and protecting organs, tissues, and joints.¹ A study even suggests that drinking water on an empty stomach can have positive effects on flushing toxins from the body, increasing energy and immunity, and reducing weight.²

In a nutshell, adequate water intake is vital for the purification of the body and can help reduce cancer risk³ but it's also important to note that the quality of water is crucial, and consuming contaminated water can lead to health risks rather than helping to reduce cancer risk.⁴

In review of the scientific literature on the relationship between vegetable and fruit consumption and risk of cancer, results from 206 human epidemiologic studies and 22 animal studies are summarized. The evidence for a protective effect of greater vegetable and fruit consumption is consistent for cancers of the stomach, esophagus, lung, oral cavity and pharynx, endometrium, pancreas, and colon. The types of vegetables or fruit that most often appear to be protective against cancer are raw vegetables, followed by allium vegetables, carrots, green vegetables, cruciferous vegetables, and tomatoes.

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Advertising in our magazine is ideal for businesses in Nigeria and South Africa, targeting to impress their clientele and to attract more prospective customers and collaborators.

Blueberry antioxidant smoothie



Anthocyanins, a type of flavonoids found in blueberries, are a key component for their many health benefits.

Ingredients

- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 handful of spinach
- 1/2 cup plain regular or nondairy yogurt
- 1 cup regular or nondairy milk
- 1/2 banana

Blend together until smooth. If you're looking for a thicker consistency, add a few ice cubes before blending. [Read more](#)



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