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**DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:** We must continue advocating for equitable access to ovarian cancer care, education, and support, especially in underserved areas.

According to various scholarly sources, malignant tumors of the female reproductive system are a leading cause of women's mortality worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, cancers such as cervical, uterine, and ovarian cancer are major contributors to these deaths. While breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in most countries,<sup>2</sup> ovarian cancer remains the leading cause of death for women diagnosed with epithelial ovarian cancer.<sup>3</sup> Ovarian cancer is widely recognized to be a silent killer, affecting women worldwide, with approximately 324,603 new cases diagnosed just only in 2022,<sup>4</sup> and significant predicted increase in annual incidence by 2050.<sup>5</sup>

Come May 8, 2025, the world will commemorate World Ovarian Cancer Day as has been done since the inauguration in 2013. The Ovarian Cancer Day is a global awareness initiative to raise awareness about the disease. The theme of this year's event, "No Woman Left Behind" is a multi-year campaign theme, advocating for policymakers to address the disparities in ovarian cancer care worldwide.

As we prepare to mobilize support for this critical cause, FWHPWI wants to emphasize the urgent need in sub-Saharan Africa. In this part of the world, the burden of ovarian cancer is significant, with limited access to screening, diagnosis, and treatment. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the age-standardized incidence rate of ovarian cancer in sub-Saharan Africa is 4.8 per 100,000 women, with a mortality rate of 3.8 per 100,000 women.<sup>6</sup>

While specific notable achievements against ovarian cancer in sub-Saharan Africa are hard to pinpoint, FWHPWI nonetheless

recognizes some key areas of progress and initiatives worth highlighting. These include the establishment of population-based cancer registries,<sup>7</sup> and the fact of increased research on traditional remedies.<sup>8</sup> These examples demonstrate that with dedication, resources, and collaboration, it is possible to make progress in the fight against ovarian cancer in sub-Saharan Africa. However, much more needs to be done. The statistical data is stark: the region accounts for only 2% of global cancer research funding, despite bearing a disproportionate burden of the disease.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, as we mark World Ovarian Cancer Day, we urge governments, healthcare providers, researchers, and advocates to prioritize equitable access to ovarian cancer care, education, and support. Areas that need urgent attention would include: 1. Strengthening healthcare systems and infrastructure to improve access to screening, diagnosis, and treatment; and 2. Mobilizing resources and funding to support ovarian cancer research in sub-Saharan Africa.

A great African proverb says, "When you pray, move your feet." Let us move our feet, taking more action for equitable access to ovarian cancer care, education, and support, particularly in underserved areas. Let us work towards a future where every woman, regardless of her geographical location or socio-economic background, has access to quality ovarian cancer care. Let us take more action to create a world where ovarian cancer is no longer a silent killer, but a disease that we can prevent, detect, and treat with dignity and compassion.

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

1. Han, X., et al; 2. Yi, M., et al; 3. Arora, N., et al; 4. WCRF; 5. WOCC; 6. IARC; 7. Omonisi, A.E., et al; Zubairu, I.H. and Balogun, M.S.; Bray, F., et al; 8. Adico, M.D., et al; Palanisamy, C.P., et al; Msoka, E.F., et al; 9. IARC



# FWHPWI 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).

The yearly commemoration of World Cancer Day which takes place on February 4, is one of such cancer awareness events FWHPWI capitalizes for our fight against gynecological cancers. This year, 2025, our director Dr. Franca Nneka Alaribe Nnadozie utilizes the opportunity to reemphasize the importance of people-centered approach to combating cancer, particularly women's cancers. In consonance with the theme 'United by Unique' generally accorded this year's campaign by the international community, Dr. Alaribe Nnadozie highlighted how every individual's experience with cancer is unique while the shared ambition of all those affected by cancer is to see governments implement policies that improve prevention, treatment, and survivorship.

FWHPWI held its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, with the theme 'Bridging the Gap: Artificial Intelligence & Alternative Medicine in Human Cancer Research & Treatment.' The conference featured Fr. Sefiri Motsepe's dedicating the event to God Almighty; a keynote address by Dr. Debbie Kupolati, represented by Prof. Mari Manjoro from the University of Venda; and presentations by four guest speakers: Dr. Jane Muchiri on 'Nutrition'; Dr. Chioma Anorue on 'Artificial Intelligence Application in Neglected

Tropical Diseases and Cancer Treatment'; Dr. Etienne Alain Feukeu on 'Artificial Intelligence Algorithms for Early Detection of Cancers: Techniques and Accuracy'; and Prof. Anuli Ogbuagu on 'Economic Impact of Integrating Artificial Intelligence and Alternative Medicine for Women's Health'. Dr. Franca Nneka Alaribe Nnadozie, the chief host, also highlighted FWHPWI's ongoing work on 'Benefits and Challenges of Utilizing Artificial Intelligence in Global Health. Furthermore, Mrs. Margret Onemu, a cancer survivor representing FWHPWI, expressed gratitude for the organization's support and announced her return to Nigeria as she nears the completion of her treatment. The event was overseen by Dr. Mabuatsela Maphoru, FWHPWI's scientific officer, and was deemed interesting, engaging, and educational by the participants. Due to time constraints, FWHPWI postponed some programs of the event to their upcoming workshop in May 2025.

March 29, 2025, FWHPWI conducted an online meeting for discussing various FWHPWI issues. Alongside other issues, Dr. FN Alaribe Nnadozie used the opportunity to present a discussion on 'Good Oral Health' as an important part of healthy lifestyle for a healthy living.



# RESEARCH NEWS

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/](http://www.wits.ac.za/news/)

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## **New trends in diagnosing and treating ovarian cancer using nanotechnology**

Typically, ovarian cancer is identified at a late stage, and there is no efficient screening method. Standard therapies for newly diagnosed cancer are cytoreductive surgery and platinum-based chemotherapy. The difficulties of traditional therapeutic procedures encourage researchers to search for other approaches, such as nanotechnology. Due to the unique characteristics of matter at the nanoscale, nanomedicine has emerged as a potent tool for creating novel drug carriers that are more effective and have fewer adverse effects than traditional treatments. [Read more](#)

## **Loss of LATS1 and LATS2 promotes ovarian tumor formation by enhancing AKT activity and PD-L1 expression**

High-grade serous ovarian cancer (HGSOC) is the deadliest and most common subtype of ovarian cancer. Unfortunately, most patients develop recurrence and, ultimately, resistance to standard platinum chemotherapy. Large tumor suppressors LATS1 and LATS2, the core Hippo signaling kinases, have been implicated in various cancer types, including ovarian cancer. [Read more](#)

## **Paradigm Shift: A Comprehensive Review of Ovarian Cancer Management in an Era of Advancements**

Patients of Ovarian Cancer present a poor prognosis mainly due to the late clinical presentation allied with the common acquisition of chemoresistance and a high rate of tumor recurrence. Effective screening, accurate diagnosis, and personalized multidisciplinary treatments are crucial for improving patients' survival and quality of life. This comprehensive narrative review aims to describe the current knowledge on the aetiology, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of ovarian cancer, highlighting the latest significant advancements and future directions. [Read more](#)

## **Global Research Trends and Recent Advances in Medicinal Plant-Synthesized Nanoparticles for Cancer Treatment**

Alternative approaches in controlling various forms of cancer are being highly explored by researchers. This study provides the global research trends in the utilization of medicinal plant-synthesized nanoparticles for cancer treatment over the span of 18 years using scientometric analysis. [Read more](#)



## **Cancer in sub-Saharan Africa: a *Lancet Oncology* Commission**

Long affected by infectious diseases and malnutrition, the population of sub-Saharan Africa is now increasingly afflicted by non-communicable diseases, including cancer. The fragile health systems in the 46 nations of this region are poorly equipped to tackle this looming health crisis, with many problems including incomplete cancer data registries, poor availability of and access to screening, diagnostics, and treatment, insufficient provision of palliative care, and a huge shortfall of trained medical personnel compounding the deteriorating situation. [Read more](#)

## **The escalating cancer burden in sub-Saharan Africa is a significant concern, with significant delays in treatment initiation for patients**

Delays in initiating cancer treatment, Time to Treatment Initiation (TTI) can negatively impact patient outcomes. A study aimed to quantify the association between TTI and survival in breast, cervical and prostate

cancer patients has been carried out in South Africa, as a microcosm of Sub-Saharan Africa.

[Read more](#)

## **Knowledge transfer interventions on cancer in Africa and Asia: a scoping review**

Cancer is a growing public health concern in Africa and Asia, where access to effective healthcare and resources is often limited. There is an urgent need for evidence-based cancer control policies in Africa and Asia, along with systems for prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, and palliative care. This emerging issue has garnered growing interest from international institutions but there has been little visible action, and the existing knowledge remains scattered and fragmented. This scoping review aims to explore the breadth and scope of evidence regarding knowledge transfer interventions to enhance cancer care in Africa and Asia.

[Read more](#)



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### **Do you know?**

**A scientist at Jackson State University in Mississippi obtained a US patent issued**

**1 Feb 2005**

**on extracts of Vernonia amygdalina, an African medicinal plant sometimes called Bitterleaf (or Bitter Leaf). According to the patent, the extracts are effective against cancer. The inventor obtained samples in Benin City, Nigeria.**

(Source: *Out of Africa*  
*Mysteries of access*  
*and benefit*)

[Read more](#)



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.

## Researchers are exploring innovative solutions, such as the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in cancer care across Africa

AI's potential to revolutionize oncology through enhanced diagnostics, treatment planning, and

patient monitoring is well-documented globally. However, in Africa, its adoption has been slower, albeit steadily progressing. This commentary explores the integration of AI in cancer care across Africa, assessing its current state, challenges and future directions. [Read more](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BREAST CANCER SUMMIT 2025

The 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Breast Cancer Research & Therapies, to be held on April 23-24, 2025, in Rome, Italy. This prestigious event will bring together leading experts, researchers, clinicians, and industry professionals from around the globe to exchange knowledge, foster collaborations, and advance the field of breast cancer research and therapies.

[Read more](#)

### 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](#)





# HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE

**Vegetables and fruits are an important part of a healthy diet, and variety is as important as quantity**



A diet rich in vegetables and fruits can lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, prevent some types of cancer, lower risk of eye and digestive problems, and have a positive effect upon blood sugar, which can help keep appetite in check. Eating non-starchy vegetables and fruits like apples, pears, and green leafy vegetables may even promote weight loss. Their low glycemic loads prevent blood sugar spikes that can increase hunger. [Read more](#)

**Nutrition and cancer: A review of the evidence for an anti-cancer diet**

It has been estimated that 30–40 percent of all cancers can be

prevented by lifestyle and dietary measures alone. Obesity, nutrient sparse foods such as concentrated sugars and refined flour products that contribute to impaired glucose metabolism (which leads to diabetes), low fiber intake, consumption of red meat, and imbalance of omega 3 and omega 6 fats all contribute to excess cancer risk. [Read more](#)

**Healthy Lifestyle and Cancer Risk: Modifiable Risk Factors to Prevent Cancer**

A potential strategy to counter the growing spread of various forms of cancer is the adoption of prevention strategies, in particular, the use of healthy lifestyles, such as maintaining a healthy weight, following a healthy diet; being physically active; avoiding smoking, alcohol consumption, and sun exposure; and vitamin D supplementation. These modifiable risk factors are associated with cancer. This review evaluates the relationship between the potentially modifiable risk factors and overall cancer development. [Read more](#)

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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## 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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