

8 May 2020

Message from Hope Light

Invitation to Help Hope Light Fight Ovarian Cancer

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, so does the need to reach out to our country's women to increase awareness of ovarian cancer signs and symptoms. It is easy to disregard symptoms of ovarian cancer in these times of crisis when the main concern of individuals is on prevention of COVID-19. This year in the USA, an estimated 21,404 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer and 14,204 women will die from this deadly disease per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with a 5-year survival rate of less than 50%.

Your help is requested to join The Hope Light Foundation in our Ovarian Cancer Awareness 2020 Campaign from **World Ovarian Cancer Day on 8 May 2020 through the Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in September 2020** by maximizing communication of ovarian cancer signs and symptoms throughout the US with a particular focus on rural and medically underserved communities. The Hope Light Foundation is a proud partner in the World Ovarian Cancer Coalition that established World Ovarian Cancer Day to globally raise voices in solidarity in the fight against ovarian cancer.

Per a recent study published in the *Journal of Rural Health* (20 February 2020), "rural ovarian cancer patients have greater odds of being diagnosed at stage IV in Midwestern states independent of the distance they lived from their primary care physician and their socioeconomic status and could affect treatment options and mortality. The researchers suggest that if rural women had better access to gynecological specialists in urban areas, it could make a difference, since those doctors are highly trained and may be able to recognize the symptoms of ovarian cancer sooner than other health-care providers."

I have attached an infographic with ovarian cancer awareness information for your use in communicating via social and print media and an attachment with worldwide/US ovarian cancer mortality and incidence data. Please feel free to forward this email along with the attachments to reach as many women as possible in your networks, circle of friends, business associates, church groups, social and professional organizations and other areas that you feel necessary to maximize ovarian cancer awareness. It is alarming to note in the attached stats charts that in three Midwestern states alone, annually 980 women will die from this "Silent Killer" with 1,423 new cases being diagnosed.

Ovarian cancer causes more deaths each year in the USA than any other gynecologic cancer and with your help, we can work together to communicate ovarian cancer awareness and save many lives. Ovarian cancer is often diagnosed in later stages due to its symptoms being misdiagnosed as a more benign condition such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome or Overactive Bladder as stated in the attached infographic. Unfortunately, there is no simple nor reliable way to screen for ovarian cancer in women that do not have any signs nor symptoms. It is therefore extremely important for women to recognize ovarian cancer warning signs and learn how to reduce their risks.

We appreciate your consideration in joining us in this life-saving campaign. With your help we can together raise our voices and **LOUDLY COMMUNICATE** ovarian cancer awareness information, promote early detection and overcome ovarian cancer's silent and deadly attacks on our nations women....It Whispers, So Listen.

Thank you for your consideration in this life-saving challenge.

Rudy & Beverly Bess
Founding Directors-The Hope Light Foundation