

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

13 February 2015

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month set to paint the town teal this February

With the lowest survival rate of any women's cancer and little improvement over the last 20 years, Ovarian Cancer Australia (OCA) is urging all Australians to take a stand against this harrowing disease and show their support during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month this February.

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month aims to raise awareness of ovarian cancer, the signs and symptoms for which are often very subtle, and the ways in which people can donate and pledge their support for women and their families living with the disease.

Treatment options have advanced little since the 1970s prompting an urgency for change. In response, Ovarian Cancer Australia launched a National Action Plan for Ovarian Cancer Research, an Australian-first agenda, setting out immediate priorities for research in order to make a significant change to the number of women dying from the disease each year.

Olympic swimmer Nicole Livingstone and her sister Karen helped found OCA after their mother passed away from ovarian cancer.

Nicole Livingstone believes there is no better time for Australians to band together to turn the tables on this disease.

"Four women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer every day and three will die," she said.

"These figures are alarming – we need to take action now and make a change."

Australians can help by hosting their own Afternoon Teal® in February, teal being the international colour for ovarian cancer.

"Register now to take a stand against ovarian cancer with a bake-off, afternoon picnic or high tea with your friends, family or colleagues," urged Ms Livingstone.

Australians can also show their support by purchasing a Teal Ribbon or Colour for a Cause teal nail polish pack from Chemmart® Pharmacies nationally. OCA's flagship day, Teal Ribbon Day, will be on Wednesday, 25th February.

With no early detection test, a key focus for Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is to educate Australians on the symptoms of the disease to increase the chances of survival. The four key symptoms are abdominal or pelvic pain, increased abdominal size or persistent abdominal bloating, the need to urinate often or urgently, or feeling full after eating a small amount.

If these symptoms are new for women and they experience one or more of them persistently over a four-week period, they should consult their GP.

Simon Lee, founder of Ovarian Cancer Australia, emphasised the need to raise funds to enable increased awareness, support, advocacy and research.

“Recent research has discovered that ovarian cancer is a collection of diseases rather than just one, each with their own distinct characteristics and behaviours,” he said.

“This gives us a range of promising opportunities, such as better treatment solutions targeting the specific nature of a woman’s type of ovarian cancer, which can only be achieved through much-needed funding for further research.

“We hope that Australians come out in force this February to allow us to really make an impact on the prognosis of the disease, better treatment options, and greater support for women and their families.”

-ENDS-

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Notes:

Teal Ribbons can be purchased for \$2 each from Chemmart® Pharmacy stores nationwide and from www.ovariancancer.net.au

Colour for a Cause teal nail polish packs can be purchased from Chemmart® Pharmacy stores nationwide www.chemmart.com.au

For more information about ovarian cancer, Teal Ribbon Day or to find out how to host an Afternoon Teal® call 1300 660 334 or visit www.ovariancancer.net.au.

Twitter: [@ovariancancerOz](https://twitter.com/ovariancancerOz) #OCAwareness #Afternoont teal #TealRibbonDay #ColourforaCause

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OvarianCancerAustralia>

Spokespeople:

- Women living with ovarian cancer or who have overcome the disease are also available for interview upon request.
- Australia’s leading scientists and researchers leading the charge against ovarian cancer
- Ovarian Cancer Australia Founder, Simon Lee
- High profile celebrities:

National: Kerry Vincent, Judge of The Great Australian Bake-Off, Queen of Cakes and with a family history of ovarian cancer

VIC: Nicole Livingstone, Olympian and media personality, Patron of OCA and with a family history of ovarian cancer

Gary Sweet, Actor

Karen Martini, Celebrity Chef and judge on MKR

Dani Venn, MasterChef 2011 finalist, MasterChef 2012 All-star

Kelly O’Dwyer, Member for the Division of Higgins in the Australian House of Representatives

NSW: Monique Wright, Television presenter and with a family history of ovarian cancer

	Kate Ritchie, Actor and radio presenter
	Adriano Zumbo, Patisserie, MasterChef regular
SA:	Tracy Collins, Top 5 MasterChef contestant
WA:	Melissa Marsh, former Captain of the West Coast Waves basketball team, columnist
QLD:	Maria Hopes, wife of Brisbane Heat Cricket Captain James Hopes and family history of ovarian cancer
TAS:	Jane Stephens, sister of Crown Princess Mary of Denmark Patricia Bailey, sister of Crown Princess Mary of Denmark
NT:	Alice Burton, TV and radio presenter
ACT:	Gai Brodtmann, Member of the Australian House of Representatives for the seat of Canberra representing the Australian Labor Party

About Ovarian Cancer Australia:

Ovarian Cancer Australia is the peak national body for ovarian cancer and was founded in 2001 by a group of people who had been affected by ovarian cancer, either themselves or through someone they loved. Ovarian Cancer Australia provides support for women and their families, raises community awareness of ovarian cancer, advocates for improved services for women and funds and promotes and funds research. Ovarian Cancer Australia's vision is to save lives and ensure that no woman with ovarian cancer walks alone. Their work is guided by their core values of Optimism, Community and Accountability. Ovarian Cancer Australia has developed an ambitious strategic plan for 2013 to 2016 to develop and grow its support, awareness, advocacy and research programs. In order to achieve their ambitious plan, organisational growth and funding is critical.