

## **International Gynecologic Cancer Society Announces Inaugural Uterine Cancer Awareness Month**

*Global initiative seeks to raise awareness about uterine cancer and promote further research funding, education, and access to care*

**Atlanta, Ga. – May 23, 2023** – The International Gynecologic Cancer Society ([IGCS](#)) in collaboration with over 25 partner organizations from around the world, today announced June as the inaugural Uterine Cancer Awareness Month. The observance is part of a global initiative led by the IGCS to raise awareness about uterine cancer (also called endometrial cancer) and promote the need for further research funding, community education, and equitable access to high-quality care. The IGCS is supported in this initiative by advocacy groups around the world, including the Endometrial Cancer Action Network for African Americans ([ECANA](#)), Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered ([FORCE](#)), [SHARE](#), and the Uterine Cancer Awareness Network ([UCAN](#)), among others.

Uterine cancer is the sixth most common cancer in women worldwide and the most common gynecologic cancer in North America, Europe, and Australia, making up nearly 50% of all gynecologic cancer cases in high-income countries. There were 417,367 new cases and 97,370 reported deaths from uterine cancer in 2020.<sup>1</sup> This year in the U.S., it is estimated that there will be 66,200 new cases of uterine cancer and 13,030 deaths. Incidence rates across all races combined continue to increase by almost 2% per year in women younger than 50 and by 1% per year in older women. Mortality rates also continue to rise, with an increase of 0.7% annually from 2016 to 2020. While there are no recommended screening tests for women at average risk, about 69% of cases are diagnosed at an early stage due to abnormal uterine bleeding or postmenopausal bleeding, which are early signs that require further evaluation.<sup>2</sup>

Uterine cancer has consistently ranked at the bottom of research funding across different cancer types.<sup>3</sup> The National Cancer Institute reported spending an estimated \$13.6 million on uterine cancer research in 2020, a drop from \$18 million in 2019.<sup>4</sup> Advancements in treatments have lagged for uterine cancers, especially in patients with recurrent or metastatic disease.<sup>5</sup> While the five-year relative survival rate for uterine cancer in the U.S. is 81%, racial disparities have led to lower survival rates.<sup>6</sup> Black women, for example, have a 64% five-year relative survival rate compared to White women at 84%, and are more likely to be diagnosed with more aggressive endometrial cancers with lower survival rates.<sup>2</sup>

The IGCS, alongside its patient advocacy arm the International Gynecologic Cancer Advocacy Network (IGCAN) and Uterine Cancer Awareness Month partners, has set ambitious goals to reduce disparities in uterine cancer care and close gaps in research and treatment. Uterine Cancer Awareness Month activities will aim to educate people across the globe about the risks of uterine cancer (e.g., obesity, diabetes, hypertension, genetics) and signs and symptoms. Through community education and programming, the IGCS and its partner organizations will help provide resources and critical information about uterine cancer to aid in early detection and risk prevention. Additionally, the IGCS will focus its efforts to drive attention and advocate for

more research funding and philanthropic efforts to help in the development of new and more effective treatments.

“There is an urgent need to make uterine cancer a global priority. On behalf of the many women who are searching for answers and those yet to be diagnosed, it’s our obligation to address the rising incidence of cases worldwide, as well to search for and implement solutions to address the deep disparities in access to equal care and treatment,” said Mary Eiken, Chief Executive Officer, IGCS. “I’m pleased that IGCAN has the ability to connect organizations in the uterine cancer space and provide more women with the resources, education, and support they need along their cancer journey and help save countless more lives across the globe.”

The patient advocacy community is invited to join the cause by spreading awareness and education throughout the month of June. To learn more about Uterine Cancer Awareness Month or to get involved, please visit [www.igcs.org/ucam](http://www.igcs.org/ucam).

### **Quotes for Media**

***Keiichi Fujiwara, M.D., president, IGCS*** – “The disparities in incidence of uterine cancer and access to care are far reaching and have become a critical issue in women’s health across the globe. Despite uterine cancer’s global impact, research into new treatments is still severely underfunded compared to other reproductive cancers. By launching this global initiative, we hope to be a catalyst for further research and community and philanthropic efforts to better understand uterine cancer and eliminate gaps in prevention, detection, and treatment.”

***Brian Slomovitz, M.D., chair, IGCS Uterine Cancer Awareness Month initiative*** – “As a physician who has worked in the field of gynecologic oncology for more than 20 years, this is a tremendous opportunity to work with the advocacy community to spread awareness about the impact of uterine cancer both here in the U.S. and on a global scale. We’re at a critical turning point in uterine cancer care where action must be taken to support better health outcomes for women, especially women of color. I look forward to collaborating with IGCS, IGCAN, and their global partners to help educate more women on the symptoms and risk factors of uterine cancer and bring the necessary attention to this disease that it deserves.”

***Adrienne Moore, ovarian and endometrial cancer survivor and advocate, president of ECANA, IGCS advocacy committee member*** – “I’m pleased to be a part of these efforts to bring the medical and advocacy communities together to raise awareness about uterine cancer and promote better access and treatment, especially in the Black community and other racially underserved populations. There is a critical need to increase community education and outreach and break the taboo and stigma associated with talking about uterine cancer. As a survivor, I strongly encourage all women to have those important conversations with their doctor early and to learn about the symptoms and risk factors. The more we open the doors to these kind of dialogues, the more women we can help save.”

### **About the International Gynecologic Cancer Society**

The mission of the International Gynecologic Cancer Society is to enhance the care of women with gynecologic cancer worldwide through education and training and public awareness. The society works to achieve its mission through strategic collaborations with regional and international organizations, hosting and supporting scientific meetings, promoting research and publications, providing mentorship and training opportunities, and patient advocacy programming.

### **About the International Gynecologic Cancer Advocacy Network**

The mission of the International Gynecologic Cancer Advocacy Network is to create and sustain a broad Network of organizations and individuals that work collaboratively—in sisterhood—“to enhance the care of women with gynecologic cancers worldwide,” with the core value that every woman under every circumstance deserves and must receive the best possible quality of care and quality of life, resulting in best outcomes.

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### **References**

<sup>1</sup> Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Today. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: <https://gco.iarc.fr/today>, accessed [15 May 2023].

<sup>2</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2023. 2023. Accessed May 9, 2023. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2023/2023-cancer-facts-and-figures.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> National Library of Medicine. Disparities in the allocation of research funding to gynecologic cancers by Funding to Lethality scores. November 4, 2018. Accessed May 9, 2023. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6519051/>.

<sup>4</sup> The National Cancer Institute. NCI Budget Fact Book. May 10, 2022. Accessed May 9, 2023. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/budget/fact-book/data/research-funding>.

<sup>5</sup> National Library of Medicine. Immunotherapy as a treatment strategy in advanced stage and recurrent endometrial cancer: review of current phase III immunotherapy clinical trials. March 16, 2021. Accessed May 9, 2023. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33796152/>.

<sup>6</sup> Jama Oncology. Racial and Ethnic Differences in Hysterectomy-Corrected Uterine Corpus Cancer Mortality by Stage and Histologic Subtype. May 5, 2022. Accessed May 9, 2023. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamaoncology/fullarticle/2792010>.