

- There are five gynaecological cancers – womb, ovarian, cervical, vulval and vaginal – but awareness levels of these cancers is very low
- Read more about them and their symptoms here: <https://eveappeal.org.uk/gynaecological-cancers/>
- The Eve Appeal tells people about the risk factors, the symptoms, what to look out for, what to ask when they go to the doctor, what to expect if they are being investigated for one of the gyny cancers and they also fund research to the early detection, prevention and risk prediction to work out how they can get people diagnosed at an earlier stage because the earlier the diagnosis (if it happens), the better
- The most common symptoms are abnormal vaginal bleeding which is a sign of 3 of the 5 gyny cancers. It's a sign of womb, cervical and vaginal cancer
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding means bleeding from your vagina when you as an individual are not expecting to
- If your periods are really heavy and painful, they need to be looked into
- It's really important to stress that all of the symptoms for the gyny cancers are always likely to be something less serious than a gyny cancer
- If you bleed from your vagina after the menopause, it's classed as post-menopausal bleeding and is a abnormal bleed and always needs to be investigated
- Ovarian cancer has unusual symptoms. Things like persistent bloating, abdominal and pelvic pain, feeling sick or full more quickly when you're trying to eat, a change in bowel habits. Persistent is the important word here - i.e. for 3 weeks or more. It's important to say to your doctor that "I want to rule out ovarian cancer"
- An unusual discharge is something to alert your doctor to
- You have to touch your vagina because if you notice that there is a lump or bump inside the vagina that is unusual for you, you need to get it checked out
- And the same with your vulva, you need to get a mirror and have a look at your own genitals. Look for changes to the skin colour, a lump or bump or mole that's sore or painful, a lasting itch etc

- You need to know what's normal for you so that you can spot a change
- Head over to eve appeal website
- Some of these cancers are more common than others. Womb cancer is more common than vulval cancer
- Itching does not always equal thrush. Especially after menopause.
- Persistent vaginal irritation is worth getting checked.
- No matter what your symptom is, go and get it checked out in exactly the same way that any breast lump needs to be checked out
- We have screening programmes for some cancers but not all cancers
- Cervical screening is hugely important
- Bowel cancer screening starts at the age of 60.
- Because we don't have screening programme for ovarian, womb, vaginal and vulval, you need to be on the lookout for those symptoms
- It's really important to attend your screening because although the HPV vaccine is brilliant, there are still about 30% of cervical cancers that are caused by HPV that is not vaccinated against. So it's a combination of knowing the symptoms, having the vaccine and also attending your screening because you might have one of the strands of HPV that are not vaccinated against
- The key message when it comes to cancer is that time matters and the earlier that you are diagnosed (if you are going to be diagnosed) the better in terms of the likelihood of your cancer being treatable and that you will make a full recovery
- And the difference between being diagnosed at a stage 1 which is when the cancer is in the area that it is affecting as opposed to stage 4, where it has spread around the body is really huge
- We're saying if you have a persistent symptom for 3 weeks then you must go to the doctor at that point. Time matters
- 1 in 2 of us will have cancer at some point, but most of us are going to survive and have a cancer which is treatable
- Classic symptoms of bowel cancer are a change of bowel habit, bleeding, or abdominal pain or unintentional weight loss and fatigue and some people might notice lump
- If we have a loved one going through cancer, be there to listen
- Be able to name it, and look after it when it comes to your genitals and your reproductive health because then we get to have fun with it too!