

OutRun Ovarian Cancer (OROC)



By Bridget Cook



OutRun Ovarian Cancer

Each year in the United States, more than 22,000 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer. These diagnoses mean that every year, thousands of women and their loved ones are anxiously looking for innovative therapies to treat a complex, difficult to detect disease. OutRun Ovarian

Cancer (OROC), a grassroots nonprofit founded in Northeast Ohio 16 years ago, works diligently to make ovarian cancer detectable and ultimately much more treatable.

Since its inception in 2003, OROC has been able to grant close to \$1,500,000 in funds to local research efforts leading the way in the Cleveland area and beyond for ovarian cancer treatment. Thanks to the support of an ever-growing community and annual 5K and Family Fun Run, OROC's impact is bigger than ever. This year, an exciting theme in the projects OROC has been funding is the idea of targeted therapy for recurrent cancer. "It's not a diagnostic test in terms of finding out if you have cancer, but rather a targeted predictor in chemotherapy," explained OROC founder Gretchen Nock. "So say you have cancer and it comes back, it will give you a more targeted therapy the second or third time around."

The collaborative landscape among Northeast Ohio's major health systems has given new hope to ovarian cancer patients looking to find treatment. At the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Research Excellence in Gynecologic Cancers (CREGC), researchers take on a "bench to bedside" approach that prioritizes research with the most tangible benefits for patients. "We want to take what we are doing in the lab and make sure that it is relevant and make sure that it reaches patients as quickly as possible," explained Amanda Maggiotto, a Program Manager for Cancer Programming at the Cleveland Clinic. "We want to build the infrastructure to support meaningful gynecologic research."

With support from internal grants as well as from organizations like OROC, the team at CREGC has brought together researchers and clinicians to pursue projects that push boundaries towards better outcomes for patients. Led by co-directors Ofer Reizes, PhD and Peter Rose, MD, CREGC has put together a biorepository or bank of tissue, tumor and blood samples available for examination and research in mice. From there, researchers can access patient samples

and attach them to clinical data, allowing research to translate to treatments more seamlessly in the future.

Much like OROC, the focus of researchers at CREGC is on treating cancer cases that return for a second, third and fourth time. There's a drive to bring research discoveries forward at a national level. "We are working on holding a medical education event in April of 2020 where physicians and researchers regionally and across the country can learn about how to treat and manage recurrent ovarian cancer," Maggiotto said. "Not only are we doing work here, we're trying to spread what we're doing and bring all the important people together to discuss how we can do this better."

OROC is always looking to fund new and innovative possibilities and those funds start with the community that rallies around ovarian cancer patients and survivors each summer in downtown Cleveland. The 16th Annual 5K and 1 Mile Family Fun Run will be held Saturday, August 3rd at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. For more information on OROC's mission and the upcoming 2019 event, visit www.oroc.org.

www.OROC.org

Ovarian Cancer Symptoms

Ovarian cancer usually presents with a constellation of symptoms including:

- Abdominal pressure, bloating or discomfort, feeling "full"
- Constipation, diarrhea/changes in bowel function
- Frequent urination/changes in bladder patterns
- Nausea, indigestion and/or gas
- Abnormal bleeding
- Shortness of breath
- Unusual fatigue/backaches
- Unexpected weight gain, increased abdominal circumference
- Unexpected weight loss

Symptoms may be experienced by women at some point in their lives, and usually do not indicate ovarian cancer. However, if symptoms persist for three weeks or more with no diagnosable cause, contact your doctor and ask about ovarian cancer.