

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Final Recommendation on Screening for Ovarian Cancer

WASHINGTON, D.C. – September 11, 2012 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) recommends against screening for ovarian cancer in women. The final recommendation on this topic, released today, applies to women who show no signs or symptoms of the disease and do not have known genetic mutations (such as *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*) that put them at increased risk for the disease.

“There is no existing method of screening for ovarian cancer that is effective in reducing deaths,” stated Task Force member and chair Virginia Moyer, M.D., M.P.H. “In fact, a high percentage of women who undergo screening experience false-positive test results and consequently may be subjected to unnecessary harms, such as major surgery,” continued Dr. Moyer.

Screening guidelines by other medical and public health organizations are in line with the Task Force’s recommendation. For example, screening asymptomatic, average-risk women for ovarian cancer is not currently recommended by the American Cancer Society or the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

“Currently, routine screening for ovarian cancer has no proven benefit and may actually lead to important harms,” stated Dr. Moyer. “In light of this, there is a critical need to develop better screening tests for ovarian cancer.”

The Task Force’s recommendation has been published online in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, as well as on the Task Force Web site at <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org>. A fact sheet that explains the recommendation statement in plain language is also available.

The Task Force is an independent group of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

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