

Template Letter to the Editor

About 15,000 women were estimated to have died of ovarian cancer just last year; 21,000 women will be diagnosed with the disease in 2011. If ovarian cancer is treated before it has spread outside the ovary, the five-year survival rate is 93 percent, but at the moment only 19 percent of ovarian cancers are found at such an early stage. And still, no reliable early detection test exists for ovarian cancer. Right now a woman's best defense is knowing the symptoms – such as bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, frequent or urgent need to urinate and difficulty eating or feeling full quickly.

Until there's an early detection test available, women and their health care providers need to be able to recognize the warning signs. Policymakers, like me, have to do their part too by advocating for expanded federal research that could help lead to a cure, or at least a much needed screening test.

The Ovarian Cancer National Alliance has asked each state house in the country to help “turn America teal” by pledging to promote ovarian cancer research and raising awareness so that everyone knows the symptoms of ovarian cancer. September is National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month during which time my staff and I will be wearing teal or teal ribbons in a show of support. This September, I am pledging my allegiance to the “United States of Teal” and you should too.

**We encourage you to edit this text and make it your own.*