


MEDIA ALERT 14 February 2011



Teal Ribbon Day Launch 
Historic Lighting of the Sydney Opera House Sails
Every woman needs to know the symptoms of ovarian cancer!

MEDIA EVENT

- Event: Teal Ribbon Day 2011 Launch – Lighting Sydney Opera House Sails Teal
- Date: 22 February 2011
- Media Call: 6:45 for 7:00pm AEDT
- Event Concludes: 7:30pm AEDT
- Location: The Steps of the Sydney Opera House
- Who's Coming: Patricia Bailey, Jane Stephens, Jean Kittson, Natasha Stott Despoja, Alice Burton, Meshel Laurie, Nicole Graney, Paula Benson, Medical practitioners, 11th Hour Ambassadors and survivors of ovarian cancer.
- Event Significance: This is the first time in history that the Sydney Opera House has been lit teal to represent ovarian cancer. In launching Teal Ribbon Day, Ovarian Cancer Australia will be lighting the Sydney Opera House sails teal in honour of all the women who have lost their battle with ovarian cancer and as a tribute to those who have overcome the disease.
- Importantly, in lighting the sails teal, we will be creating a symbol of hope for the 1 in 77 women who will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in their lifetime.
- What's Happening: At 7:00pm AEDT, Ovarian Cancer Australia's Ambassadors will be joined by 77 women on the steps of the Sydney Opera House to launch Teal Ribbon Day with the lighting of the sails in teal which is the international colour for ovarian cancer.
- Speakers: Jean Kittson - Master of Ceremonies and National Ambassador
Natasha Stott Despoja - Ambassador
Ovarian Cancer Survivor – Special Guest



MEDIA RELEASE 14 February 2011

Teal Ribbon Day Will Launch with National Symbol of Hope

On the 22 February (the eve of Teal Ribbon Day), for the first time in history the Sydney Opera House will be lit teal, the international colour representing ovarian cancer.

This symbolic lighting of the Sydney Opera House sails in teal will be in honour of all the women who have lost their battle with ovarian cancer and a tribute to those who have overcome the disease.

Importantly, Ovarian Cancer Australia will be creating a symbol of hope for the 1 in 77 women who will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in their lifetime.

In launching Teal Ribbon Day with this historic event, Ovarian Cancer Australia will also generate awareness of ovarian cancer with the sale of Teal Ribbons and Touch of Teal events to provide a conversational platform that educates women about the disease and symptoms while funding vital support programs and research that can save lives.

Every day, ovarian cancer affects Australian women of all ages - someone's partner, someone's sister, someone's daughter, someone's friend or someone's mother. Girls as young as 7 and young women in the prime of their lives have been diagnosed with the disease. And while the risk of ovarian cancer increases with age (average age for an ovarian cancer diagnosis is 64) the fact is that the majority of Australian women DON'T know the symptoms of ovarian cancer but almost ALL women with the disease do suffer symptoms.

This year, more than 1200 Australian women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer which is 3 women every day, while more than 800 will lose their battle with the disease – that's one woman every 11 hours!

For Teal Ribbon Day, we're inviting everyone to purchase a Teal Ribbon and wear a 'Touch of Teal' to show their support for the women who have, and will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer this year.

In a tribute to women who fight this disease, Ovarian Cancer Australia's Teal Ribbon Day will form the focal point of a national awareness campaign aimed at educating women about the symptoms of ovarian cancer while creating a deeper understanding of the impact ovarian cancer has on women and their loved ones.

Paula Benson, Chair of Ovarian Cancer Australia and an ovarian cancer survivor said, "With teal being the international colour representing ovarian cancer, we initiated Teal Ribbon Day to provide a platform to educate women as well as generate vital funds for support services and research to improve long-term outcomes for women with ovarian cancer.

"Importantly, Teal Ribbon Day is essential in informing ALL Australian women about the risks and symptoms of ovarian cancer that if diagnosed in the early stages, can significantly improve treatment outcomes offering a greater chance of survival," she said.

"Teal Ribbon Day is our primary means of educating EVERY WOMAN about the symptoms of ovarian cancer, to inform them that there is NO EARLY DETECTION TEST FOR the disease and importantly, enabling us to dispel the myth that a Pap smear detects the disease - IT DOES NOT!

"Only knowing and identifying the symptoms, can aid in early detection that can save lives so it's vital that women make it their business to learn the symptoms today," Ms Benson said.

Currently, 75% of women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the advanced stages and tragically will not live beyond five years. However, if diagnosed in the early stages, the majority of these women can survive.

“With one in 77 Australian women developing ovarian cancer in their lifetime, and one woman dying from this devastating disease every 11 hours, the message to all Australian women is clear; learn the symptoms of ovarian cancer today. Don’t leave it until the 11th hour!” Ms Benson said.

“For Teal Ribbon Day, we’re inviting women to visit our website www.ovariancancer.net.au to learn the symptoms of ovarian cancer and, for those who are concerned about symptoms they may be experiencing, they can download our free Symptom Diary to track what they are experiencing to better communicate their symptoms to their GP,” she said.

Ovarian Cancer Australia is also inviting all women to purchase a Teal Ribbon and host an Afternoon Teal™, an initiative designed to raise funds while promoting ovarian cancer awareness among women’s networks, organisations and corporates who can come together to share an Afternoon Teal™ with friends, family and colleagues.

Afternoon Teal™ Ambassador, Jean Kittson urged all Australians to get behind this initiative and help women with ovarian cancer and their families. “By hosting an Afternoon Teal™ during February or on Teal Ribbon Day - Wednesday 23rd February - you can all raise funds and at the same time learn the symptoms of ovarian cancer,” Ms Kittson said.

“Your event can be as simple or elaborate as you like. It could be a High Teal in the garden with your girlfriends on a lazy Sunday afternoon, or an Afternoon Teal™ at work or at a neighbourhood picnic at the beach or in the park,” she said.

“Whatever activity you do with family, friends and colleagues this February, make it a Touch of Teal or an Afternoon Teal™ event and help raise funds that will touch the lives of women who have been touched by ovarian cancer,” she said.

Ovarian Cancer Australia is the only national organisation delivering ovarian cancer awareness and support to women and their families affected by the disease and is a partner of a national research program working toward diagnosis and treatments for ovarian cancer.

Teal Ribbons are available at Chemmart, Napoleon Perdis, Ovarian Cancer Australia and Showbiz. Register your Touch of Teal or Afternoon Teal™ event or make a donation today at www.ovariancancer.net.au or call 1300 660 334.

Teal Ribbon Day is Wednesday 23rd February!

For more information about ovarian cancer and Ovarian Cancer Australia:

Phone: 1300 660 334

Email: admin@ovariancancer.net.au

Website: www.ovariancancer.net.au

For more information regarding the Royal College of General Practitioners visit www.gplearning.com.au

ENDS

Contact Insight Communications for more information, photographs or to arrange an interview.

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We are able to offer a number of interview and photo opportunities with ambassadors and survivors.

JOURNALIST NOTES

Ovarian Cancer Disease Facts

- * Awareness of symptoms is the principal means of early diagnosis to save lives!
- * There is no early detection test – a Pap smear does NOT detect ovarian cancer
- * 1 in 77 Australian women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in their lifetime
- * Knowing the symptoms is the only means of early detection
- * Early detection may save your life!
- * In 2011, more than 1200 Australia women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer
- * More than 800 will die from the disease – that's 1 woman every 11 hours
- * 75% of women are diagnosed in the advanced stages and will not live beyond 5 years
- * Ovarian cancer is the 6th most common cause of cancer death in Australian women
- * Ovarian cancer can affect women of all ages – girls as young as 7 have been diagnosed. But the risk of getting ovarian cancer increases with age. The average age for an ovarian cancer diagnosis is 64
- * The majority of Australian women DON'T know the symptoms of ovarian cancer but almost all women with ovarian cancer suffer symptoms
- * To ensure a good chance of survival it is essential that ovarian cancer is caught in the early stages
- * If found in the early stages, the majority of women will be alive and well after five years
- * Continuity in healthcare may help GPs to diagnose ovarian cancer symptoms

Disease Symptoms

Every woman needs to know the symptoms of ovarian cancer which may include:

- * Increased abdominal size or persistent bloating
- * Unexplained abdominal or pelvic pain
- * Difficulty eating and feeling full quickly
- * Needing to urinate more often or urgently or a change in bowel habits
- * When these symptoms are new and persist for more than two weeks, see your GP and ask them to consider the possibility of ovarian cancer
- * Ovarian cancer can only be confirmed at the point of surgery. If ovarian cancer is suspected, a GP will recommend tests which can suggest if ovarian cancer is a possibility, these include the CA125 test, and a trans-vaginal ultrasound, but these tests cannot be used to screen for, or diagnose ovarian cancer

Ovarian Cancer Australia's One-Stop-Shop Website

A hub of information about ovarian cancer dedicated to raising awareness of the disease and providing information and support options for women diagnosed and their families including:

- * Symptoms of ovarian cancer
- * Reducing your risk
- * How ovarian cancer is treated and locating a gynaecological oncologist near you
- * Support groups in each state
- * Tips and advice for carers, family and friends of women with ovarian cancer
- * Links to relevant support and information organisations
- * Research organisations in Australia and research news
- * Clinical trials and how to join a trial
- * Personal stories of women diagnosed
- * Online forum
- * Fact sheets including: early menopause, coping with chemotherapy, complementary therapies, staying well

About Ovarian Cancer Australia

Ovarian Cancer Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation providing support and advocacy for people affected by ovarian cancer, and is the peak body for ovarian cancer awareness and prevention in Australia.

In 2011, Ovarian Cancer Australia will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. It is the country's only national organisation delivering ovarian cancer awareness and support to women and their families affected by the disease and is a partner of a national research program working toward diagnosis and treatment for ovarian cancer.

Ovarian Cancer Australia's Vision Is To Ensure That:

Every Australian woman knows the symptoms of ovarian cancer and everyone affected by ovarian cancer feels personally supported and well informed about the latest treatment and research.

Ovarian Cancer Australia's Mission Is To:

- * **Support** women with ovarian cancer, their families, friends and carers with compassionate support programs and practical resources.
- * **Educate** communities and individuals about the disease and increase their awareness of symptoms and the latest treatment, research and clinical trials from across Australia.
- * **Advocate** to improve outcomes, treatment and quality of life for women with ovarian cancer.

For more information about Ovarian Cancer Australia or ovarian cancer, or to make a tax deductible donation or purchase Teal Ribbons (minimum quantity of 5 at \$2 each) please contact Ovarian Cancer Australia. Phone: 1300 660 334 - Email: admin@ovariancancer.net.au - Website: ovariancancer.net.au

Ovarian Cancer Australia Exists To:

- * Save women's lives by raising awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer
- * Educate communities and individuals about the disease and the latest treatment and research
- * Support those touched by ovarian cancer with compassionate programs and practical resources
- * Be the voice of ovarian cancer awareness and prevention in Australia

Awareness Is The Key To Saving Lives - We Raise Awareness By Promoting:

- * Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is February
- * 2011 Teal Ribbon Day is Wednesday 23 February
- * Teal is the international colour representing ovarian cancer – Purchase a Teal Ribbon

Why We Raise Funds - 'How do donations make a difference?'

Donations will help fund Ovarian Cancer Australia's awareness programs and support services for patients and their families. These include:

- * Community awareness campaigns and campaign materials
- * Resilience Kits – a free resource for women with ovarian cancer
- * Support Groups
- * Rural and Regional Tele-Support Service
- * Online forum
- * Support materials for Family & Friends of women affected by ovarian cancer

Medical Research

Ovarian Cancer Australia also supports the Australian Ovarian Cancer Study, the only national collaborative research program between clinicians, scientists, patients and advocacy groups aimed at improving the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of ovarian cancer.

Ovarian Cancer Facts & Figures

How Many Women In Australia Have Ovarian Cancer?

- * 1 in 77 Australian women will develop ovarian cancer in their lifetime. Each year around 800 Australian women will lose their battle with ovarian cancer – that's one woman every 11 hours

Is There A Test For Ovarian Cancer?

- * No! There is NO early detection test or screening program for ovarian cancer. A Pap smear does NOT detect ovarian cancer. This is why awareness of the symptoms is critical to Australian women

Facts About Ovarian Cancer In Australia

- * This year more than 1200 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer; around 800 will die from the disease
- * There is no reliable early detection test for ovarian cancer
- * The majority of Australian women do not know the symptoms of ovarian cancer but many women who are diagnosed frequently report four key symptoms
- * Ovarian cancer is the 6th most common cause of cancer death in Australian women

What Are The Symptoms Of Ovarian Cancer?

The four most frequently reported symptoms from women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are:

- * Increased abdominal size or persistent bloating
- * Unexplained abdominal or pelvic pain
- * Difficulty eating and feeling full quickly
- * Needing to urinate more often or urgently or a change in bowel habits

Additional Symptoms

Other symptoms that have been commonly reported by women with ovarian cancer include:

- * Vague but persistent stomach upsets such as wind, nausea, heart burn or indigestion
- * Vaginal bleeding
- * Weight loss or weight gain
- * Excessive fatigue

When these symptoms are new and persist for more than two weeks, see your GP and ask them to consider the possibility of ovarian cancer. If your GP suspects ovarian cancer they need to refer you to a gynaecological oncologist.

How Is Ovarian Cancer Diagnosed?

- * Ovarian cancer can only be confirmed at the point of surgery. If ovarian cancer is suspected, a GP will recommend tests which can suggest if ovarian cancer is a possibility, these include the CA125 test, and a trans-vaginal ultrasound, but these tests cannot be used to screen for, or diagnose ovarian cancer.

What Is The Life Expectancy For A Woman Diagnosed With Ovarian Cancer?

- * 75% of women are diagnosed in the advanced stages and will not live beyond 5 years.
- * If diagnosed early, the majority of those women will survive. Which is why awareness and early detection is so important.

How Is It Treated?

- * Treatment for ovarian cancer usually involves surgery and chemotherapy. Radiotherapy is also used on occasion.

Who Is At Risk Of Developing Ovarian Cancer?

Factors that are considered to increase the risk of ovarian cancer include:

- * Age – women over the age of 45 are at greater risk of developing ovarian cancer. However, it affects women of all ages - ovarian cancer has been diagnosed in girls as young as 7.
- * Never having taken the contraceptive pill
- * Having few or no pregnancies
- * A high-fat diet, being overweight and smoking
- * A history of cancer in the family, especially ovarian, breast or some bowel cancers (approximately 10% of all ovarian cancer cases are due to an inherited gene fault and these are found in 1 in 500 people in Australia)
- * Being of Ashkenazi Jewish descent



Ovarian Cancer Australia Awareness & Fundraising Initiatives

About Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

- * Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is an international campaign to raise awareness of ovarian cancer and to ensure that every woman knows the symptoms of the disease
- * In Australia, Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is held in February. Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month is also a time when Ovarian Cancer Australia encourages fundraising activities from the community, volunteers and friends to raise vital funds to support programs and resources for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer
- * Our primary fundraising and awareness icon is our Teal Ribbon

The Teal Ribbon

- * 2011 Teal Ribbon Day is Wednesday 23 February
- * The Teal Ribbon is the international ribbon for ovarian cancer awareness
- * Tax-deductible Teal Ribbons are available from Chemmart, Spotlight and Napoleon Perdis stores or from Ovarian Cancer Australia or, when you book any ticket to see a concert or show anywhere in Australia during February through showbiz.com.au, Showbiz will purchase a Teal Ribbon for patrons.

Touch of Teal

- * Teal is the international colour representing ovarian cancer. In 2011, Ovarian Cancer Australia is inviting the community to add a 'Touch of Teal' during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month (February) to help raise awareness of the disease
- * We hope that Australians will add a touch of teal to their wardrobe to raise awareness of the disease and its symptoms

Afternoon Teal™

- * Throughout February, Ovarian Cancer Australia is asking the community to host an 'Afternoon Teal™' to raise money and awareness
- * Details of how to host an Afternoon Teal™ are available on www.ovariancancer.net.au