

# VERY IMPORTANT INVITATION PROJECT



September 2023 Newsletter

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## September is Gynaecological Cancer Awareness Month,

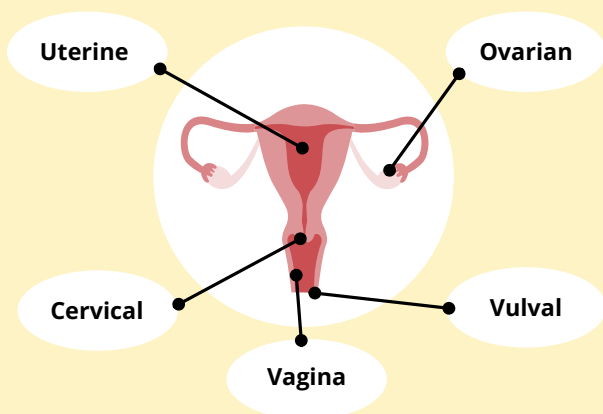
Here at the 'The Very Important Invitation' we are concentrating on raising awareness and offering support. It is so important to normalise talking about our gynaecological health, as it means people feel more comfortable discussing any issues they may have and therefore, it can help save lives.

Each year in the UK, over 22,000 women are diagnosed with a gynaecological cancer. This means 60 people receive this life-changing news every day. Sadly, 21 of these women die each day from their gynaecological cancer.

Did you know there are 5 main different gynaecological cancers – cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal and vulval.

[Click here for our poster with more information on the signs and symptoms.](#)

If you have any concerns or feel you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please contact your GP; it might not be anything serious but early detection and treatment can increase the chance of positive outcomes.



## Catch the team out and about this month!

Here are some of the places that the team will be this month, spreading the word about cervical and all gynaecological cancer;

- Perinatal mental health group 5/9
- Community Connect , The Atheneum, Bury St Edmunds 8/9
- Siam Surgery 13/9
- Loose Women, Ipswich regent 16/09
- Ipswich Half Marathon 17/9
- Derby road surgery 20/9
- Victoria Surgery 20/9
- Framlingham WI session 20/9
- Ipswich Hospital 21/9
- Pinewood Surgery 21/9
- Wimpole Road Surgery Colchester practice engagement session, 26/09
- Wellbeing Wednesday, Trinity Church, Bury St Edmunds. 27/9
- Endeavour House 28/9
- Macmillian Coffee Morning, Bury Library 28/9

## Myth Busting; True or False

**Cervical screening (smear test) can detect all gynaecological cancers**

FALSE

Cervical screening (smear test) is a test to check the health of the cervix and help prevent cervical cancer. It checks primarily for the HPV virus (Human Papilloma Virus) Which is a very common infection spread by skin-to-skin contact and if persistent, can lead cell changes in the cervix.

The test looks for conditions that may lead to cervical cancer, which can be detected years before cancer develops. The test does not detect ovarian or womb cancers or any other type of cancer. It is therefore vital to attend when called for cervical screening and to speak to GP with any concerns or symptoms.

**You can't get gynaecological cancer after a hysterectomy**

FALSE

There are different types of hysterectomy, subtotal, total or radical. Subtotal hysterectomy removes the uterus only, and leaves the cervix behind. Removing the uterus removes the risk of uterine cancer. If you have a cervix, it is still possible to develop cervical cancer.

**The contraceptive pill increases my risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer**

FALSE

Taking the combine pill can reduce the risk of ovarian and endometrial cancer and the reduced risk stays when people stop taking the pill.

## If you do one thing this awareness month, then please talk openly about it

Discuss the issue of gynaecologic cancer and how big of a danger it is. 1 in 3 people are still missing their cervical screening, so if you or someone you know has a cervix, ask them when their last cervical screening was. Remind, encourage, and support - it could save a life. Millions of people are still unaware that these cancers even exist.

Our advice is to attend your screening, speak to GP with any concerns or symptoms or speak the Very Important Invitation Project who can support with reasonable adjustments. Try and maintain a balanced healthy lifestyle and avoid risk factors like obesity and smoking that are known to be linked with gynaecological cancer.

## What else have we been up too?

We have been supporting Suffolk Rape Crisis (SRC) with survivor focused cervical screening workshops, these are for anyone who has ever experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in their lives. We have upcoming specialist survivor clinics in September, which offer the opportunity to explore the toolkit, ask questions and have any additional needed support.

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