



LGSOC Glossary for Patients and Caregivers

Use this glossary of commonly used words and phrases associated with LGSOC to help you feel more prepared when talking to your care team.

What is LGSOC?

LGSOC (low-grade serous ovarian cancer or carcinoma): A type of ovarian cancer that starts in the thin layer of tissue around the ovaries (also known as the epithelium). Unlike the more common high-grade serous ovarian cancer (HGSOC), LGSOC is resistant to chemotherapy.

- **Low-grade:** A cancer's grade describes how abnormal the cancer cells look under a microscope. Low-grade cancers look fairly normal and tend to grow slowly (but persistently), relative to high-grade cancers.
- **Serous:** This means that the cancer originated in the serous membrane, which is part of the epithelium.

Commons terms when discussing LGSOC

- **Gynecologic oncologist:** A surgeon who has specialized training in diagnosing and treating cancers of the female reproductive organs.
- **Medical oncologist:** A doctor who has specialized training in diagnosing and treating cancer in adults and may coordinate treatment given by other specialists.
- **Recurrent cancer:** When cancer returns (or recurs), either after initial treatment or after a time period during which the cancer is no longer detectable.
- **Genetic testing:** A type of medical test that screens for changes in a patient's genes (mutations) that may be related to disease. Genetic testing, specifically germline and somatic testing, is recommended for all patients with ovarian cancer, including LGSOC.
- **CA 125 test:** This is a test to determine the amount of CA 125 (cancer antigen 125) present in the blood. For ovarian cancer patients, this test can be used to monitor cancer treatment and check for cancer that has come back (cancer recurrence).

Terms you may hear when discussing treatment

- **Chemotherapy:** Treatment that uses drugs to kill fast-growing cells in the body, including both normal cells and cancer cells.
- **Endocrine therapy:** A cancer treatment that blocks the making or action of estrogen. Also called hormone therapy.

- **Angiogenesis inhibitors:** These cancer medicines block the growth of blood vessels that help tumors grow rather than blocking the growth of tumor cells themselves.
- **Clinical trial:** Research on a new medicine or treatment to assess its safety and/or how well it works. Clinical trials study different aspects of medicines and how they interact with the body.
- **Medically induced menopause:** This is when medical treatments, such as chemotherapy or hormone therapy, slow or stop the functioning of ovaries, causing menopause to occur earlier than normal. Medical menopause can be temporary or permanent, depending on the treatment. Menopause side effects can be very disorienting, especially for younger women, and include hot flashes, mood swings, and infertility.
- **Surgical menopause:** This is when the surgical removal of the ovaries causes immediate permanent menopause.

Terms you may hear when discussing surgery

- **Laparotomy:** A surgical procedure used to access the abdominal cavity and examine the organs within it. A laparotomy is often used to diagnose and stage ovarian cancer, as well as to remove cancerous tissue and perform other necessary surgeries.
- **Laparoscopy:** A surgical procedure that is an alternative to open surgery, and works by inserting a laparoscope, a tiny lighted camera, through a small “keyhole” incision in your abdomen. It is an exploratory surgery, similar to a laparotomy.
- **Debulking surgery:** Also known as cytoreductive surgery, the goal of this type of surgery is to remove as much of the tumor as possible. It is commonly used to treat advanced malignant tumors, including ovarian cancers.
- **Oophorectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove one or both of the ovaries.
- **Hysterectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove all or part of the uterus. It may also involve removal of the cervix, ovaries, fallopian tubes, and other surrounding structures.
- **Omentectomy:** A surgical procedure to remove the omentum, which is a tissue layer surrounding the stomach and other organs in the abdomen.

Terms related to the science of LGSOC

- **Mutations:** A change in the nucleotide of a gene, also known as a variant. Some variants can cause a disease, like cancer, to occur or increase the risk of occurrence. BRCA is a common mutation in breast and ovarian cancers, but it is relatively rare in LGSOC.
- **RAS:** RAS is a commonly-mutated gene in cancer. RAS gene mutations result in the overactivation of the RAS protein, which activates other pathways that promote cancer growth and survival, such as the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) and phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3K) pathways. RAS/MAPK pathway associated mutations are common in LGSOC.