

Int J Cancer. 1995 Sep 15;62(6):678-84.

**Reproductive and other factors and risk of epithelial ovarian cancer: an Australian case-control study.
Survey of Women's Health Study Group.**

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Of the few factors known to be associated with epithelial ovarian cancer, the most consistently observed relate to women's reproductive function, although even here uncertainties remain. We have undertaken a case-control study involving personal interviews with over 1,600 women, the largest of its kind to date, to investigate further the associations between women's reproductive histories and other factors and the development of ovarian cancer. Cases were drawn from women diagnosed with epithelial ovarian cancer in 3 Australian states, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, between August 1990 and December 1993, and controls were drawn at random from the electoral roll, stratified by age and geographic region. Trained interviewers administered standard questionnaires to obtain detailed information about women's reproductive and contraceptive histories and other factors of interest, such as smoking and family history of ovarian or other cancer. Findings were based on data from 824 cases and 860 controls and confirmed the reduced risk of ovarian cancer associated with increasing parity and duration of use of the oral contraceptive pill (OCP), hysterectomy and tubal ligation. The strongest association of all was seen with use of the OCP for 10 years or more. An inverse association between ovarian cancer and age at first birth was observed, but this was not statistically significant. There were no associations between development of ovarian cancer and number of incomplete pregnancies, use of hormone replacement therapy or menstrual history. Among other factors considered, education after leaving school was negatively associated and high body mass index, family history of ovarian cancer, use of talc in the abdominal or perineal region and smoking were positively associated with occurrence of ovarian cancer.