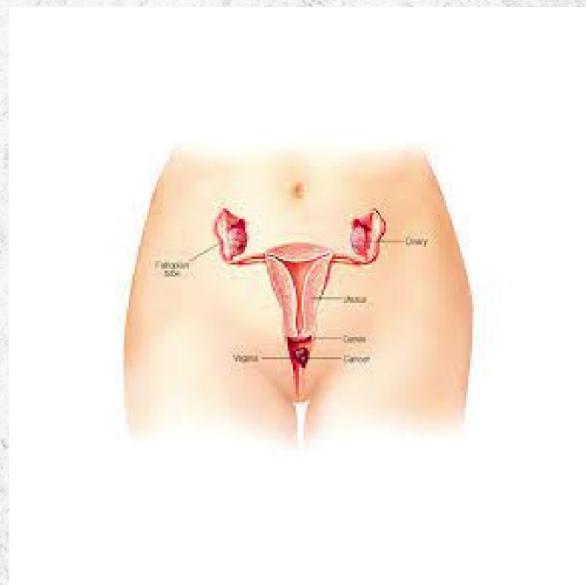


Vulvar cancer:



Vulvar cancer, usually a skin cancer, develops in the area around the opening of the vagina. Though it can happen at any age, vulvar cancer is most commonly diagnosed in older females.

Symptoms:

- Redness or a change in skin color of the vulva may be precancerous.
- Lumps or flat, red, or flesh-colored sores that can be seen and felt and that do not heal.
- Itching that doesn't go away.
- Bleeding that isn't from menstruation.

Causes:

It's unclear what causes vulvar cancer, but in general, scientists believe that cancer begins when a cell develops changes (mutations) in its DNA.

Types of vulvar cancer:

The common types of vulvar cancer include:

- **Vulvar squamous cell carcinoma.** This cancer begins in the thin, flat cells that line the surface of the vulva. Most vulvar cancers are squamous cell carcinomas.
- **Vulvar melanoma.** This cancer begins in the pigment-producing cells found in the skin of the vulva.

Risk factors:

- The risk of vulvar cancer increases with age
- Being exposed to human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is a sexually transmitted infection that increases the risk of several cancers, including vulvar cancer and cervical cancer.
- Tobacco increases the risk of vulvar cancer.
- Having a weak immune system.

Treatment:

Treatment options for vulvar cancer depend on the type, stage and location of the cancer, as well as the overall health and the preferences.

Surgery

Removing the cancer and a margin of healthy tissue (excision)

Removing part of the vulva or the entire vulva (vulvectomy)

Removing a few nearby lymph nodes (sentinel node biopsy).

Radiation therapy



Radiation therapy uses high-powered energy beams, such as X-rays and protons, to destroy cancer cells. It is sometimes used to shrink large vulvar cancers to make it more likely that surgery will be successful.

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy is a drug treatment that uses chemicals to destroy cancer cells. Chemotherapy drugs are usually administered through a vein in your arm or by mouth.

