



Matte Story – Community rallies against an overlooked disease

Walk brings together women and families touched by ovarian cancer

From the moment she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and through her treatment, Nadia Hillier had never met anyone living with disease. She was terrified to learn that fewer than half of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are expected to live past five years. Further devastation set in when Nadia found out that treatment would affect her ability to have children.

While thousands of women nationwide are living with ovarian cancer, sometimes it can be impossible to find someone who understands the sense of loss firsthand.

Months passed before Nadia found her way to the Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope, where she finally met other survivors. They greeted her with open arms and a Walk t-shirt that was coloured teal to represent ovarian cancer awareness.

“For the first time I came face to face with women who had been through similar journeys, women who I now call my teal sisters,” says Nadia. “They’ve been pillars of strength, especially on days when I thought I was a goner. I would have never met them had it not been for the Walk.”



Nadia Hillier (pictured in teal) at the 2014 Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope

The statistics are staggering. Ovarian cancer claims the lives of five Canadian women every day. It’s difficult to detect and too often found in its late stages, making the disease the most fatal women’s cancer in the country. Yet there is no reliable screening test.

Nonetheless, Martha Hoyt, a survivor and advocate, is encouraged to see how the Walk is changing the course of ovarian cancer for good.

“Once a year, communities across the country can join hands in a show of support,” says Martha. “The Walk both honours and protects the bonds we hold closest. It gives people the opportunity to provide strength for our mothers, daughters, sisters and soulmates.”



Martha Hoyt and her family at the inaugural Walk in 2002

To date, the Walk has raised over \$19 million for support, awareness, and vital research initiatives that benefit people nationwide. But there is still much to be done.

Sunday, September 13 holds a special place on this year’s community calendar. It’s when the Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope - the largest and most powerful event to dedicate attention and fundraising towards overcoming this disease - takes centre stage.

To register or donate, visit ovariancanada.org.