

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

World Gynecologic Oncology Awareness Day (World GO Day) Press release.

Support Not Stigma: join the 8th #WorldGODay on September 20!

On September 20, 2026, the World will celebrate the 8th World Gynecologic Oncology Day (World GO Day). Launched by ESGO ENGAGe in 2019 to support the more than 3 million women living with a gynecological cancer, a set of cancers originating in the reproductive organs that includes ovarian cancer, uterine/endometrial/womb cancer, cervical cancer, vaginal cancer, and vulvar cancer, as well as rare cancer types. There are more than 1 million newly diagnosed every year, and this figure, according to Globocan Cancer Tomorrow, is due to rise to more than 2 million by 2050 (with increases varying from 38% for endometrium to 77% for vagina). Only an improvement in global awareness and a change in health policies and disease management can help to face this challenge.

Therefore, on September 20th, PAGs (Patient Advocacy Groups), patients, caregivers, doctors, researchers, companies, and institutions are invited to celebrate together with ESGO and ENGAGe this World GO Day to contribute to the change. Sport activities, public talks, webinars, conferences, hospital events and interviews with experts, patient stories sharing and many other activities are organized worldwide to spread information all over the world about gynecological cancer symptoms, risks, care, cancer prevention, and screening.

This year, the theme is **Support Not Stigma** — a call to move beyond awareness of the problem and actively build systems of support for women affected by gynaecological cancers. Women's health has historically been less prioritised. Even today, gynaecologic health is not talked about enough. Female reproductive systems and female-presenting bodies are stigmatised and often seen as 'taboo'.

Stigma, defined as “a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something,” is something that all cancer patients may face, but due to societal and cultural factors including misogyny, ageism, or taboos about discussing reproductive organs, may be even more frequently endured by patients diagnosed with ovarian, uterine/endometrial, cervical, vaginal, or vulvar cancer.

Much too often, many are taught to dismiss or even hide the signs and symptoms of gynaecologic cancer for the comfort of others. This can result in later diagnoses which, unfortunately, are linked to worse survival and treatment outcomes. Patients and their caregivers often report feeling unsupported or alienated, even within previously supportive relationships. Depression and stress may also contribute to poorer response to cancer treatment.

But there are more reasons than ever to be hopeful. By building awareness about the importance of knowing risk factors and identifying signs and symptoms of gynaecologic cancers, we can reduce stigma bit by bit. By educating about cancer prevention — from HPV vaccines to positive lifestyle changes — we are reducing risk for the next generation. And by listening to patient stories, we are creating a world where all of us can be seen and supported. For more information on this topic, please visit <https://www.worldgoday.org/support-not-stigma/>

The aim and hope for this year's World Gynecologic Oncology Day is to surpass the impact of 2025, which had 45 countries and 117 PAGs involved, and 126 activities organised. All together we can win.

Hashtags:

#SupportNotStigma

#NoStigmaInGO

#WorldGODay

Draft of quotes:

1.

It is already a stigma just to be diagnosed with gyne cancer, let alone mention that you have cervical or vulvar cancer. We don't see enough examples of women who come forward in public with their diagnosis. The cancer and the treatment touches a lot of different areas: reproductive inability, body image, sexual health, social interactions, etc. Therefore, it is important to show real support — not just awareness — to reduce the impact on the lives of women with gyne cancers.

Kim Hulscher, Netherlands; ENGAGe Co-Chair and cervical cancer survivor

2.

World GO Day is a pivotal celebration to support patients affected by gynecological cancers and their relatives. They are the centre of our dedication and care. Patients are fighters and warriors against their disease, but this special day allows them, along with physicians, researchers, pharma companies and other supporters to stand together and show that no woman should face gynaecological cancer without a strong network of support around her.

Prof. Philippe Morice, France; ENGAGe Co-Chair and gynaecological oncologist at Institut Gustave Roussy

3.

This year for World GO Day on September 20, I encourage everyone to show support, not stigma, for women living with gynaecologic cancers. Every year more than 1 million women globally are diagnosed with a gynaecologic malignancy. It's time to raise awareness because early detection can save thousands of lives. As a gynaecologic oncologist, I strongly recommend you get informed, get screened, and empower others to do the same.

Prof. Anna Fagotti, Italy; ESGO President and gynaecological oncologist at Policlinico Gemelli

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About Gynecological Cancers

With an estimated annual incidence of more than 3.6 million and mortality exceeding 1.3 million, these cancers account for nearly 40% of all cancer incidence and for more than 30% of all cancer mortality in women worldwide. Among those, approximately 44% are represented by cervical cancer, 29% by endometrial cancer, 23% by ovarian cancer and less than 5% by other gynecological cancers, i.e., vulvar and vaginal cancers. In 2020, 420,000 women worldwide died from gynecological cancers.

Some gynecological cancers can be prevented. Regular screening and examinations along with lifestyle choices can help reduce risk factors and even promote early diagnosis at a stage when treatment can be more effective, and a complete cure is possible. Although cervical cancer is mostly preventable and can be cured if diagnosed early through screenings, 7 out of 10 women avoid these examinations because of fear they might have the HPV virus.

