

## PROJECT FACT SHEET

# Studies Point Toward Potential Protein Targets for Treatment of Ovarian Cancer

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Ovarian cancer will claim the lives of approximately 1600 Canadian women this year. Because it is frequently discovered very late (after it has already spread through the abdominal cavity), ovarian cancer is the most deadly of gynecological cancers. For this reason, researchers are working diligently to discover a method of detecting ovarian cancer at its earliest stage and to find a drug or combination of drugs capable of treating drug-resistant forms of the disease.

One such researcher is Mark Nachtigal. His research has uncovered a number of differences between ovarian cancer cells and normal ovarian cells. With help from NSHRF, the National Cancer Institute of Canada with funds from the Canadian Cancer Society, and CaRE Nova Scotia, Dr. Nachtigal's research has led to a broader understanding of how normal growth regulatory processes may become disrupted in ovarian cancer cells.

Dr. Nachtigal's research also discovered a protein normally produced by the body that appears to enhance ovarian cancer cells to become aggressive and laid the groundwork for future studies to explore ways of blocking this proteins' activity through medication.

"This research is twofold, to explore the roles these proteins play in making ovarian cancer cells more aggressive and to set the stage for additional research that looks at the potential curative affects of blocking these proteins," says Dr. Nachtigal.

Research like this takes Canadian health-care researchers closer to novel diagnostic and therapeutic strategies, which will affect health-care management and improve outcomes for Canadian ovarian cancer patients.

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