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A Lifeline for Jewish Women With Ovarian Cancer

By Gabrielle Birkner

The genetic mutations that greatly increase a woman's chance of getting breast cancer — [mutations that are common among Ashkenazi Jewish women](#) — also put her at high risk for ovarian cancer. So it makes sense that [Sharsheret](#), which, since 2001, has been offering free support services to young Jewish women living with (or at high risk for) breast cancer, will be expanding to provide for women with ovarian cancer and those predisposed to the disease.

"We've found that women [with breast cancer] who are in our program, and women who are thinking about genetic testing, also have ovarian cancer on their minds," Elana Silber, Sharsheret's director of operations, told The Sisterhood.

Sharsheret is targeted at Jewish women in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. The organization [offers](#) confidential genetic counseling, peer support groups, health information, and seminars on topics such as parenting young children while undergoing cancer treatment. Within the next year, these services will be made available to women suffering from or at risk for ovarian cancer, Silber said.

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