

“I WEAR A WHITE SHIRT BECAUSE...”

Notable mothers and daughters explain why they support the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation by wearing Witchery's new white shirts

*Photography **Damian Bennett** Styling **Kelly Hume**
Creative direction **Aleksandra Beare** Interviews **Hannah James***

Lucy Turnbull's experience with ovarian cancer, like that of so many other people, is one of loss. "A very dear friend of mine died of ovarian cancer – she was only in her mid-fifties," reveals the formidable wife of our Prime Minister, who is a philanthropist, former Lord Mayor of Sydney, author and lawyer. Characteristically, she channelled that loss into a positive outcome, as she explains: "I got involved in a biotech company which has been doing clinical trials into ovarian cancer." The company is Prima BioMed, where she is still the chairman, and which now focuses on breast cancer and melanoma. Thanks to this role, she

has learned, "There are a lot of promising therapies for all sorts of cancer in the immunotherapy space. So there is potentially a revolution underway in the way that cancer is treated."

It's a revolution that's sorely needed, as the Turnbull family history can attest. "Malcolm's mother passed away from bowel cancer – she died at the age of only 61," explains Turnbull.

Her husband was perhaps thinking of that experience in February, when he was moved by the speech of Ann-Maree Mulders, an ovarian-cancer survivor who told her story to Parliament House. "I don't think many of us got through

listening to [your speech] without a tear," he confessed to Mulders.

The Turnbull women have discussed their health for a different reason of late. "My husband and I have had to do quite a few rounds of IVF in the past few years," says Daisy Turnbull Brown, who is the mother of Jack, two. "We've been talking about the stresses of that. Also, while you're having fertility treatments, the first questions that are asked are about your mother, so I've been talking to her about that, too." Thankfully, the IVF treatments have been successful: "I'm having a little girl in September. So there are three generations of women in this photo." ▶

DAISY TURNBULL BROWN

31, TEACHER

LUCY TURNBULL

58, PHILANTHROPIST, FORMER POLITICIAN, FIRST LADY



“AWARENESS, RESEARCH AND BETTER TREATMENT OPTIONS ARE SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO DO OUR BEST TO PROMOTE”

LUCY TURNBULL

DAISY WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; her own earrings

LUCY WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; MSGM skirt, myer.com.au; her own earrings and ring

SAMANTHA HARRIS

25, MODEL

MYRNA SUSSYE

55, FULL-TIME MUM



“MY AUNTIE MARIE
DIED OF CANCER
FOUR YEARS
AGO, AND I WANT
TO RAISE
AWARENESS FOR
SUCH AN
AMAZING CAUSE”

SAMANTHA HARRIS

SAMANTHA WEARS

Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Ellery jumpsuit, elleryland.com.au; Dinosaur Designs ring, dinosaurdesigns.com.au; her own earrings

MYRNA WEARS

Witchery shirt and pants, as before; Georg Jensen earrings, georgjensen.com

SALLY OBERMEDER

42, TV PRESENTER

**ANNABELLE
OBERMEDER** FOUR



“IT’S OUR COLLECTIVE
RESPONSIBILITY TO
ENSURE NO MORE
LIVES ARE LOST TO
OVARIAN CANCER”

SALLY OBERMEDER

Sally Obermeder has more reason than most to be concerned about women’s cancers. Diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2011, the day before giving birth to her longed-for daughter Annabelle, Obermeder immediately embarked on an eight-month course of chemotherapy. After a double mastectomy, she has been cancer-free ever since.

Her message is clear: “It’s so important we talk about these issues. If a friend has concerns, instead of saying, ‘I’m sure it’s nothing’ – which comes, of course, from a place of love and kindness – we need to say, ‘If you’ve got bloating, if you need to go to the bathroom more frequently, those are symptoms of ovarian cancer, so go see your doctor.’ That’s being a true friend.”

Not only has Obermeder battled the disease herself, she has friends who have had bowel cancer, and she recently lost her mother-in-law to cervical cancer. “They’re all part of the bigger picture. We need to keep raising awareness, keep raising funds until this is no longer a disease, until we refer to it in the same way we talk about scurvy – no one gets scurvy any more! Our children need to be able to say, ‘Can you believe back in 2016 people used to die from ovarian cancer? Isn’t that crazy?’” ▶

SALLY WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Marni pants, (02) 9327 3809

ANNABELLE WEARS Zara top, (02) 9376 7600; Miss Maticovski skirt, tonimaticovski.com

RACHEL GILBERT
33, FASHION DESIGNER

STORM AND SLOANE
TWO YEARS, FIVE MONTHS



"I HAVE TWO YOUNG DAUGHTERS AND AS A COMMUNITY, WE'VE GOT TO UNITE TO PROTECT THEIR FUTURE, AND OURS, AGAINST THIS DISEASE"

RACHEL GILBERT

STORM WEARS (at left) Miss Maticovski dress, tonimaticovski.com; her own shoes

RACHEL WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Rachel Gilbert skirt, rachelgilbert.com; Jan Logan earrings, janlogan.com

SLOANE WEARS her own clothes

ITA BUTTROSE
74, JOURNALIST & TV PRESENTER

KATE MACDONALD
49, ARCHITECT



"I WANT WOMEN TO KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THEIR HEALTH IS"

ITA BUTTROSE

ITA WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; her own earrings and ring

KATE WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; her own earrings

Media veteran Ita Buttrose has always used her public profile for good. "I think the first breast-cancer campaign I ever took part in was somewhere in the 1970s," she remembers. And it's an example for her of just how effective these campaigns can be: "There is now a greater awareness about breast cancer and the need to have mammograms. Campaigns do work, but they have to be consistent and persistent. Now we have to get the same level of awareness about ovarian cancer."

Buttrose is the national ambassador of Alzheimer's Australia and the patron of the Macular Disease Foundation Australia – yet, after losing her brother Will to cancer, it's this disease that's close to her heart. And particularly women's cancers: "Women's health is always a priority in my life. A lot of women tend to overlook their own health needs as they're so busy looking after everyone else. So you have to remind them occasionally that it's important to look after themselves."

One of those busy women is her daughter, Kate Macdonald, an architect with two daughters, Clare, seven, and Samantha, six. "Mum and I talk about everything – communication in families is so important," says Macdonald.

Buttrose agrees, and adds: "When your daughter becomes a mother, as mine is, you join the club and you start talking about children and children's health. You do tend to share the secrets of a woman's passage through life with your daughter." ▶

BILLIE PLEFFER
31, FILM DIRECTOR

GILLIAN ARMSTRONG
65, FILM DIRECTOR



"I WANT TO WAVE THE FLAG
FOR THE GOOD GUYS:
THE WOMEN, DOCTORS
AND RESEARCHERS,
FIGHTING THE BAD GUY
- OVARIAN CANCER"

GILLIAN ARMSTRONG

BILLIE WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Jacquemus top and pants, mychameleon.com.au; her own rings

GILLIAN WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; Sportmax pants, sportmax.com; Tiffany & Co. bracelet (at top), tiffany.com.au; her own earrings, watch, bracelet (below) and rings

"MY GODMOTHER
DIED OF OVARIAN
CANCER. WE NEED
TO FIND A TEST"

EDWINA McCANN

EDWINA McCANN
43, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
OF *VOGUE AUSTRALIA*

JEMIMA & LUELLE
BOTH 10

Edwina McCann has experienced the ravages of ovarian cancer in her personal and professional life. Her first loss was in the early 2000s: "My godmother, Kate Delaney, died of ovarian cancer," says McCann. "She was one of my mum's best friends, but she never got to meet my daughters." And the second was a fellow editor, Sarah McCarthy, who worked at *Girlfriend* magazine and passed away of the disease in 2013. "She went to the same school as me; she was two years younger than me," says McCann. "I don't want to lose any more people I know to it. It's an awful, awful cancer. It really is a silent killer, as was the case with my godmother – in the end, the ovarian cancer caused bowel cancer. It's the root cause of secondary cancers. As we know, it has a very low survival rate and I don't think women listen to those early signs in their bodies. And the signs are so similar to other signs of things that are completely normal and non-life-threatening."

Despite these brushes with the disease, McCann has hope for the future: "I think Angelina Jolie's journey has taught people a lot about the existence of the BRCA gene [which is implicated in hereditary ovarian cancer] and the extreme levels people have to go to, to prevent these cancers. But there is more awareness now about genetics, understanding what we pass down, and general health and wellbeing. We're much more aware now of diet and environment than we were when I was a young girl." ▶



JEMIMA WEARS (at left) Country Road pinafore, countryroad.com.au; Bardot Junior shirt, davidjones.com.au; Spring Court sneakers, (02) 9365 3898

EDWINA WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Chloé skirt, parlourx.com; Saint Laurent shoes, (02) 9362 0510

LUELLE WEARS Bardot Junior dress, davidjones.com.au; Spring Court sneakers, as before

AMBER SYMOND
44, FULL-TIME MUM
AVALON KEATING
NINE

"I WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AWARENESS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CONTRIBUTE TO FUNDING FOR RESEARCH"
AMBER SYMOND

AVALON WEARS Witchery dress and shoes, witchery.com.au
AMBER WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; Bassike skirt, bassike.com; Acne Studios shoes, acnestudios.com; her own ring



"I WANT MY DAUGHTER TO KNOW THAT WOMEN HAVE UNITED IN RAISING AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR A FUTURE THAT IS OVARIAN-CANCER FREE"

TAHYNA MACMANUS

YVONNE TOZZI
58, BLOGGER

TAHYNA MACMANUS
29, ACTOR/DIRECTOR,
MUM-TO-BE

Talkative, animated and articulate, Yvonne Tozzi, blogger at *Fifty Shades Of Old Age* and mother of actor/director Tahyna MacManus and model Cheyenne Tozzi, seems an unlikely candidate for brain tumours. Yet she's under observation for several growths after having one removed two years ago. Add a brush with bowel cancer in 2006, which she thankfully caught early, and cancer becomes a very personal subject. "I have a friend who has ovarian cancer. She's a doctor herself, and she's someone who's aware of her body, but she had no idea she had it. So the more awareness we can raise, the better."

Things have changed, she continues, from back in her mother's day: "Cancer wasn't something people talked about. They'd say, 'You know John from up the road, he had a pain in his stomach and he died.' And I'd ask my mother, and she'd say, 'He must have had *the cancer*.'"

Tahyna, who is due to give birth imminently, is grateful she will be bringing her daughter into a society that's more open about health. "This campaign is great – it's nice to know my daughter's coming into a world where women are supporting each other." **S**

May 2 is OCRF White Shirt Day. Wear white to support the cause. For each white shirt sold from April 6 to May 2, Witchery will donate everything (except GST) to ovarian-cancer research. To buy a shirt, visit witchery.com.au/whiteshirtcampaign.

FOLLOW HANNAH ON TWITTER @HFJAMES.

YVONNE WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Max Mara pants, world.maxmara.com; Christie Nicolaidis earrings, christienicolaidis.com.au; Superga sneakers, (02) 9256 8450

TAHYNA WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; Bassike pants, bassike.com; Chloé sandals, misslouis.com.au; Christie Nicolaidis earrings, as before; her own wristbands



MEGAN IRWIN
21, MODEL

HELLEN MULDOON
57, RETAIL WORKER

"CANCER HAS TOUCHED MY FAMILY, AND I WANT TO SUPPORT NOT ONLY THE WOMEN GOING THROUGH THIS, BUT ALSO THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS"

MEGAN IRWIN

MEGAN WEARS Witchery shirt, witchery.com.au; Ellery pants, elleryland.com/au; Aquazzura shoes, (02) 9328 6288; Tiffany & Co. earrings, tiffany.com.au; her own ring

HELLEN WEARS Witchery shirt, as before; Ellery skirt, as before; Christian Louboutin heels; christianlouboutin.com/au; The Family Jewels earrings, thefamilyjewels.com.au; her own ring

Hair Richard Kavanagh for Redken, Luana Coscia for Oribe

Make-up Charlie Kielty for Nars at Mecca Cosmetics, Naomi McFadden for MAC Cosmetics