

Anaplastic astrocytoma is a rare malignant brain tumor. Astrocytomas are tumors that develop from certain star-shaped brain cells called astrocytes. Astrocytes and similar cells form tissue that surrounds and protects other nerve cells found within the brain and spinal cord. Collectively, these cells are known as glial cells and the tissue they form is known as glial tissue. Tumors that arise from glial tissue, including astrocytomas, are collectively referred to as gliomas. The symptoms of anaplastic astrocytomas vary depending upon the specific location and size of the tumor. The specific cause of this tumor is unknown.