



[Home](#) → [Health Topics](#) → Childhood Brain Tumors

URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/childhoodbraintumors.html>

Childhood Brain Tumors

Brain tumors [<https://medlineplus.gov/braintumors.html>] are abnormal growths inside the skull. They are among the most common types of childhood cancers [<https://medlineplus.gov/cancerinchildren.html>] . Some are benign tumors, which aren't cancer. They can still be serious. Malignant tumors are cancerous.

Childhood brain and spinal cord tumors can cause headaches and other symptoms. However, other conditions can also cause the same symptoms. Check with a doctor if your child has any of the following problems:

- Morning headache or headache that goes away after vomiting
- Frequent nausea and vomiting
- Vision, hearing, and speech problems
- Loss of balance or trouble walking
- Unusual sleepiness
- Personality changes
- Seizures
- Increased head size in infants

The symptoms are not the same in every child.

Doctors use physical and neurological exams, lab tests, and imaging to diagnose brain tumors. Most childhood brain tumors are diagnosed and removed in surgery.

Treatment for children is sometimes different than for an adult. Long-term side effects are an important issue. The options also depend on the type of tumor and where it is. Removal of the tumor is often possible. If not, radiation, chemotherapy, or both may be used.

NIH: National Cancer Institute

Start Here

- Pediatric Brain Tumor Facts [<https://www.abta.org/about-brain-tumors/caregiving/pediatric-caregiver-resources-center/>] (American Brain Tumor Association)







Diagnosis and Tests

- Tests for Brain and Spinal Cord Tumors in Children [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/brain-spinal-cord-tumors-children/detection-diagnosis-staging/how-diagnosed.html>] (American Cancer Society)
- Ultrasound: Head (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/ultrasound-head.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/ultrasound-head.html>]



Prevention and Risk Factors

- Risk Factors for Brain and Spinal Cord Tumors in Children [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/brain-spinal-cord-tumors-children/causes-risks-prevention/risk-factors.html>] (American Cancer Society)


Treatments and Therapies

- Childhood Central Nervous System Atypical Teratoid/Rhabdoid Tumor Treatment [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/child-cns-atrt-treatment-pdq>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/tratamiento-atrt-snc-infantil-pdq#_52]
- Childhood Central Nervous System Germ Cell Tumors Treatment [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/child-cns-germ-cell-treatment-pdq>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/tratamiento-celulas-germinativas-snc-infantil-pdq#_152]
- Childhood Ependymoma Treatment [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/childhood-ependymoma>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/ependimoma-infantil#_96]
- Childhood Glioma (including Astrocytoma) Treatment [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/childhood-glioma-astrocytoma>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/gliomas-infantiles-astrocitomas#_104]
- Treatment Option Overview (Childhood Craniopharyngioma) [https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/child-cranio-treatment-pdq#_49]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/tratamiento-craneo-infantil-pdq#_39]
- Treatment Option Overview (Childhood Medulloblastoma and Other Central Nervous System Embryonal Tumors) [https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/child-cns-embryonal-treatment-pdq#_146]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/cerebro/paciente/tratamiento-embrionarios-snc-infantil-pdq#_146]


Living With

- Children with Cancer: A Guide for Parents [<https://www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/guide-for-parents>]  (National Cancer Institute)
- Support for Families when a Child Has Cancer [<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/caregiver-support/parents>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/cancer/sobrellevar/apoyo-a-quien-cuida/padres>]

Specifics

- Astrocytomas [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/astrocytoma.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/astrocytoma.html>]
- Ependymomas [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/ependymoma.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/ependymoma.html>]
- General Information about Childhood Medulloblastoma and Other Central Nervous System Embryonal Tumors [https://www.cancer.gov/types/brain/patient/child-cns-embryonal-treatment-pdq#_1]  (National Cancer Institute)
- Gliomas [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/gliomas.html>] (Nemours Foundation)


Genetics

- Rhabdoid tumor predisposition syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/rhabdoid-tumor-predisposition-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)


Images

- Craniotomy - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100048_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100048_1.htm]

Statistics and Research

- Cancer in Children and Adolescents [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/childhood-cancers/child-adolescent-cancers-fact-sheet>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/infantil/hoja-informativa-ninos-adolescentes>]

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Childhood Brain Tumors [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22brain+neoplasms%22&aggFilters=ages:child,status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles



References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: A diverse landscape of FGFR alterations and co-mutations suggests potential therapeutic... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40744913>]
- Article: Accurate Paediatric Brain Tumour Classification Through Improved Quantitative Analysis of (1)H... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40702777>]
- Article: Updates on cancer vaccines in brain cancer: Advances in neuroblastoma, delivery... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40627495>]
- Childhood Brain Tumors -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Brain+Neoplasms%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+child+%5Bmh%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Reference Desk

- Dictionary of Cancer Terms [<https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/publicaciones/diccionarios/diccionario-cancer/>]

Find an Expert

- American Cancer Society [<https://www.cancer.org/>]
- Choosing a Cancer Doctor [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/finding-care/where-to-find-cancer-care/choosing-a-cancer-doctor.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/como-sobrellevar-el-cancer/encontrar-tratamiento/como-elegir-un-medico-y-un-hospital/como-seleccionar-a-un-medico.html>]
- National Cancer Institute [<https://www.cancer.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol>]
- NCI - Designated Cancer Centers [<https://www.cancer.gov/research/infrastructure/cancer-centers>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/investigacion/infraestructura/centros-oncologicos>]

Patient Handouts

- Brain surgery [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003018.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003018.htm>]
- Brain tumor - children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000768.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000768.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

After chemotherapy - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000012.htm>]

Brain surgery [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003018.htm>]

Brain surgery - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000124.htm>]

Brain tumor - children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000768.htm>]

Craniotomy - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100048_1.htm]

Eating extra calories when you are sick - children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000034.htm>]

Head MRI [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003791.htm>]

Stereotactic radiosurgery - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000131.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Brain Tumors [<https://medlineplus.gov/braintumors.html>]

Cancer in Children [<https://medlineplus.gov/cancerinchildren.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Childhood Brain Tumors* is the National Cancer Institute [<http://www.cancer.gov/>]

MedlinePlus links to health information from the National Institutes of Health and other federal government agencies. MedlinePlus also links to health information from non-government Web sites. See our [disclaimer](https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html>] about external links and our [quality guidelines](https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html>] .

The information on this site should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Contact a health care provider if you have questions about your health.

[Learn how to cite this page](#)

