Printed March 31, 2015 from http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/astrocytoma-childhood/coping-side-effects

Astrocytoma - Childhood - Coping with Side Effects [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 03/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about steps to take to help cope with physical, social, and emotional side effects. This page includes several links outside of this guide to other sections of this website. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Fear of treatment side effects [3] is common after a diagnosis of astrocytoma, but it may help to know that preventing and controlling side effects is a major focus of your child?s health care team. This is called palliative or supportive care, and it is an important part of the overall treatment plan, regardless of the stage of disease.

Common side effects from each treatment option for astrocytoma are described in detail within the Treatment Options [4] section. Learn more about the most common side effects of a tumor and different treatments, along with ways to prevent or control them [5]. Side effects depend on a variety of factors, including the type of tumor, its grade, the length and dosage of treatment(s), and your child?s overall health. Also, side effects of newer treatments or treatments in clinical trials may be different and not as well studied as older treatments.

Before treatment begins, talk with your child?s doctor about possible side effects of each type of treatment your child will be receiving. Ask which side effects are most likely to happen, when they are likely to occur, and what can be done to prevent or relieve them. And, ask about the level of caregiving your child may need during treatment and recovery, as family members and friends often play an important role in the care of a child with astrocytoma. Learn more about caregiving [6].

In addition to physical side effects, there may be emotional and social effects as well. Families are encouraged to share their feelings with a member of their health care team who can help with coping strategies [7], including concerns about managing the cost of your child?s care [8].

During and after treatment, be sure to tell the health care team about the side effects your child experiences, even if you feel they are not serious. Sometimes, side effects can last beyond the treatment period, called a long-term side effect. A side effect that occurs months or years after treatment is called a late effect [9]. Treatment of both types of effects is an important part of survivorship care. Learn more by reading the After Treatment [10] section or talking with your child?s doctor.

The next section helps explain medical tests and check-ups needed after finishing cancer treatment. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select After Treatment, or you can select

another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/astrocytoma-childhood/coping-side-effects
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/24492
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/18495
[5] http://www.cancer.net/node/25238
[6] http://www.cancer.net/node/25009
[7] http://www.cancer.net/node/21
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[10] http://www.cancer.net/node/18498