

[Home](#) > [Types of Cancer](#) > [Bone Cancer](#) > Bone Cancer - Symptoms and Signs

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Bone Cancer - Symptoms and Signs [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 05/2016

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about body changes and other things that can signal a problem that may need medical care. To see other pages, use the menu.

People with bone cancer may experience the following symptoms or signs. Sometimes, people with bone cancer do not have any of these changes. Or, the cause of a symptom may be another medical condition that is not cancer.

When a bone tumor grows, it presses on healthy bone tissue and can destroy it, which causes the following symptoms:

- **Pain.** The earliest symptoms of bone cancer are pain and swelling where the tumor is located. The pain may come and go at first. Then it can become more severe and steady later. The pain may get worse with movement, and there may be swelling in nearby soft tissue.
- **Joint swelling and stiffness.** A tumor that occurs near or in joints may cause the joint to swell and become tender or stiff. This means a person may have a limited and painful range of movement.
- **Limping.** If a bone with a tumor breaks, or fractures, in a leg, it can lead to a pronounced limp. Limping is usually a symptom of later-stage bone cancer.

- **Other less common symptoms.** Rarely, people with bone cancer may have symptoms such as fever, generally feeling unwell, weight loss, and [anemia](#) [3], which is a low red blood cell level.

If you are concerned about any changes you experience, please talk with your doctor. Your doctor will ask how long and how often you have been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a [diagnosis](#) [4].

If cancer is diagnosed, relieving symptoms remains an important part of cancer care and treatment. This may also be called symptom management, palliative care, or supportive care. Be sure to talk with your health care team about symptoms you may experience, including any new symptoms or a change in symptoms.

The [next section in this guide is Diagnosis](#) [4]. It explains what tests may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Or, use the menu to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/bone-cancer/symptoms-and-signs>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25242>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18539>