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## **[Central Nervous System Tumors - Childhood - Symptoms and Signs \[1\]](#)**

**This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board \[2\]](#), 04/2015**

**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 on the side of your screen.

Children with a CNS tumor may experience the following symptoms or signs. Sometimes, children with a CNS tumor do not show any of these symptoms. Or, these symptoms may be caused by a medical condition that is not a tumor.

The symptoms of a CNS tumor can affect any of the brain's functions and depend on where the tumor is located. A CNS tumor may cause the following symptoms:

- A seizure or convulsion, which are sudden involuntary movements of a person's muscles
- Staring or repetitive automatic movements, such as a neck tilt or a squint
- Unexplained, persistent nausea and projectile vomiting
- Weakness or clumsiness, such as difficulty walking and balancing, that seems to get worse

- Early or delayed puberty, or delayed or abnormal growth
- Sleep apnea, which is when breathing stops periodically while asleep
- Vision problems
- Headache, which may wake a child up at night or develop early in the morning
- Pain, especially back pain
- Irritability, listlessness, or changes in personality

In a baby, the only symptom may be that the head is growing too fast. An infant's skull can expand to make room for a growing tumor, so the baby may have a larger than expected head.

If you are concerned about one or more of the symptoms or signs on this list, please talk with your child's doctor. Your doctor will ask how long and how often your child has been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a [diagnosis](#) [3].

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

*The [next section in this guide is Diagnosis](#) [3] and it explains what tests may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.*

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## Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/central-nervous-system-tumors-childhood/symptoms-and-signs>

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

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18665>