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Ependymoma - Childhood - Overview [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 08/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find some basic information about this disease and the parts of the body it may affect. This is the first page of Cancer.Net?s Guide to Childhood Ependymoma. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen. Think of that menu as a roadmap to this full guide.

Childhood ependymoma is a type of brain tumor. A tumor begins when normal cells change and grow uncontrollably, forming a mass. A tumor can be cancerous or benign. A cancerous tumor is malignant, meaning it can spread to other parts of the body. A benign tumor means the tumor will not spread. Ependymoma is a rare, cancerous brain tumor.

A brain tumor is named after the cells from which it develops. Ependymoma starts in the ependymal cells that line the ventricles, or fluid-filled spaces, in the brain and the central canal of the spinal cord. The brain and spinal column make up the central nervous system (CNS), where all vital functions are controlled, including thought, speech, and body strength.

Ependymoma belongs to a group of brain tumors called gliomas. A glioma is a tumor that grows from a glial cell, which is a supportive cell in the brain. Even though ependymoma can occur in any part of the brain or spine, it most commonly occurs in the cerebrum, which is the largest part of the brain. The cerebrum is the top part of the brain and controls motor skills, or muscle coordination, and talking.

This section covers ependymoma diagnosed in children. Learn more about brain tumors in adults [3].

Looking for More of an Overview?

If you would like additional introductory information, explore this related item. Please note this link takes you to another section on Cancer.Net:

- Cancer.Net Patient Education Video [4]: View a short video led by an ASCO expert in childhood cancer that provides basic information and areas of research.

To continue reading this guide, use the menu on the side of your screen to select another section.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/ependymoma-childhood/overview
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/31327
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/27386